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LEGISLATION IN

REGARD TO CHILDREN.

p. 100

Report of the Proceedings

at the

Special Conference, May 22 and 23, 1906,

at the Guildhall, in the City of London, convened
by the Committee of the British Section of the
International Congress for the Welfare and Pro-
tection of Children (held in London in 1902, under
the Patronage of His Majesty the King, and of
H.R.H. the Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll).

President:

SIR WILLIAM BOUSFIELD.

Treasurer:

SIR WILLIAM CHANCE, Bart.

Hon. Secretaries:

G. E. LLOYD BAKER, Esq.

J. MILSON RHODES, Esq., M.D.

Secretary:

W. G. LEWIS (Barrister-at-Law),

8, Wells Street, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.

Published for the Committee by

P. S. KING & SON, Orchard House, WESTMINSTER.

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LEGISLATION IN REGARD TO CHILDREN



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REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

At the Special Conference, May 22 and 23, 1906, at the Guildhall, in the City of London, convened by the Committee of the British Section of the International Congress for the Welfare and Protection of Children (held in London in 1902, under the Patronage of His Majesty the King, and of H.R.H. the Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll).

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REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

At the Special Conference held at New York City, New York, on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 1906.

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BRADBURY, AGNEW, & CO. LD., PRINTERS,
LONDON AND TONBRIDGE.

SIR WILLIAM WILKINSON

1906

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1906

G. H. LLOYD-BAXTER

DR. J. WILSON

1906

W. G. LEWIS

1906

1906

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PREFACE.

WHEN, in the year 1902, the International Congress for the Welfare and Protection of Children, held under the august patronage of His Majesty the King and of H.R.H. the Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, came to a happy conclusion, the British Committee of the Congress felt that their labours were not over, but, in some respects, just beginning, for upon them was formally laid the burden of preparing and publishing the official report of the proceedings,¹ arranging for the next Congress, and, in the meanwhile, of vigilant observation of all movements relating to the welfare of the young in this country. In pursuance of the last-named object, the Committee met on many occasions, and one outcome of their deliberations was the resolve to hold a Conference in London for the consideration of certain legislative proposals which particularly related to children.

A Special Committee consisting of the following members was thereupon formed :—Miss N. Adler (co-opted member of the Education Committee of the London County Council); Miss Baker (member of the Metropolitan Asylums Board and of the Holborn

¹ A few copies of the Report of the 1902 Congress (published by P. S. King & Son at 2s. 6d.) will be issued at half-price to subscribers to this Report.

Board of Guardians); Lady Frederick Brudenell-Bruce, Mrs. Burgwin, Sir Arthur Clay, Bart., Mr. George Craighill, J.P. (Clerk of the Gateshead Board of Guardians, member of the Central Committee of Poor Law Conferences); Miss Margaret Frere (Hon. Manager of the Tower Street, Seven Dials, School of the London County Council); Mr. Arthur J. S. Maddison (Secretary of the Reformatory and Refuge Union, etc.); Mr. Henry J. Manton (Birmingham, member of the Central Committee of Poor Law Conferences); Miss Mason (Local Government Board Inspector of Boarded-out Children); Dr. G. E. Shuttleworth, Sir William Chance, Bart. (Hon. Secretary of the Central Committee of Poor Law Conferences and Hon. Treasurer of the Congress); with Mr. Lloyd-Baker (member of the Central Committee of Poor Law Conferences) and Dr. J. Milson Rhodes (Chairman of the Central Committee of Poor Law Conferences) as joint Hon. Secretaries; and Sir William Bousfield (member of the Central Committee of Poor Law Conferences) as President.

The Corporation of the City of London again most generously placed the Council Chamber of the Guildhall at the service of the Conference, and the Rt. Hon. the Lord Mayor (Alderman Sir Walter Vaughan Morgan, Bart.) kindly consented to attend in state and welcome the delegates.

In fairness to the readers of the various papers it should be stated that, in order to keep the cost of the publication of this Report within the limits of the slender resources upon which the Committee could

reckon, it has been necessary to abbreviate some of the papers, but that "sub-editing" has been, it is hoped, efficiently done, and the Report has probably been enhanced in value as duplications have been avoided.

The writer hopes that the Conference has helped to form public opinion, and that the day is at hand when the nation will no longer be subject to the reproach of having within its gaols those whose tender age, if no other consideration, should have saved them from the penalty of imprisonment.

The Committee are glad to report that the fourth International Congress will be held in Berlin next year, and they are sure that the British Committee of the Congress, which is shortly to meet, will do everything in their power to make it a success so far as Great Britain is concerned.

W. G. LEWIS,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW (GRAY'S INN),

Secretary of the Conference.

8, WELLS STREET, GRAY'S INN ROAD,
LONDON, W.C.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE (by Mr. W. G. Lewis, Secretary of the Conference)	V
LIST OF DELEGATES	I
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS (by Sir William Bousfield) . . .	5
"REMAND HOMES":	
Paper by Miss Baker (Holborn Board of Guardians and Metropolitan Asylums Board)	10
"CHILDREN'S COURTS AND PROBATION OFFICERS":	
Paper by Miss Adler (Co-opted Member of the Education Committee of the L.C.C.)	18
Paper by Mr. Courtenay Lord, J.P., Birmingham . . .	25
"RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF THE PROBATION SYSTEM IN THE UNITED STATES":	
Paper by Mrs. Dwight Sheffield (formerly Probation Officer of New York)	33
"THE PROBATION SYSTEM FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS IN PARIS":	
Paper by M. Marcel Kleine (Editor of <i>L'Enfant</i>) . . .	41
"CHILDREN'S RELIEF COMMITTEES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS":	
Paper by Sir Charles A. Elliott, K.C.S.I. (Chairman of the Joint Committee for Underfed Children in London)	50
Paper by Miss Margaret Frere (Manager of the Tower Street L.C.C. School)	58
"THE CANTINES SCOLAIRES OF PARIS":	
Paper by M. Marcel Kleine	65
L.C.	b

CONTENTS.

APPENDIX.

	PAGE
"STATEMENT ON 'UNDERFEEDING'": By Mr. John Scott, B.A. (Lond.), (Headmaster L.C.C. School, Wood Close, Bethnal Green)	83
"THE CHILD AT SCHOOL"	84
"LEGISLATION CONCERNING CHILDREN"	86
"OFFICIAL REPORT ON NEW YORK PROBATION WORK IN THE PAST YEAR"	87
ANNOUNCEMENT AS TO NEXT CHILDREN'S CONGRESS (BERLIN)	89



LEGISLATION IN REGARD TO CHILDREN.

SPECIAL CONFERENCE, 22nd and 23rd MAY, 1906.

THE LORD MAYOR welcomed the Delegates, and said that the Corporation were very pleased to place the Guildhall at their disposal.

SIR WILLIAM BOUSFIELD proposed a vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor and Corporation, saying that the Conference Committee had been greatly inspired by the fact that they had had the support of the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of London, and they were gratified at his lordship's welcome extended to them that day.

DR. RHODES seconded the motion, which was carried with acclamation, and acknowledged by the LORD MAYOR.

THE PRESIDENT announced that letters regretting inability to be present had been received from His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury (who had consented to be a patron of the Special Conference), the Rt. Hon. the Earl Beauchamp, K.C.M.G., the Rt. Hon. Herbert Gladstone (Home Secretary), the Rt. Hon. John Burns (President of the Local Government Board), the Rt. Hon. Arthur T. Lyttelton, Dr. Macnamara, M.P., the Bishop of London, Mr. Robert Peacock (Chief Constable of Manchester), Dr. Arthur Downes (Local Government Board), Mr. Cecil Chapman (Metropolitan Police Magistrate), Mr. Alfred King (Prescot), Mr. Henry J. Manton, Mr. C. S. Loch (Charity Organisation Society), Mr. George Craighill, J.P. (Gateshead), Councillor William Tarr (Swansea), Mrs. Batters (Holywell), Miss Davenport-Hill, the Hon. Mrs. Cropper, Mr. E. Fellows Jenkins (Secretary of the New York S.P.C.C.), and others.

Amongst those present were the following:—

Ackroyd, Thos. R. (Manchester and Salford Boys' and Girls' Refuges); Adams, Mrs. M. Bridges; Adler, Miss N. (Committee on Wage-earning Children); Allport, Mrs. Eunice (Ipswich); Appleton, John (South Shields); Arch, James (Coventry); Astles, Alfred (Manchester).

2 LEGISLATION IN REGARD TO CHILDREN.

Bagenal, P. (L.G.B.); Bailey, Mrs. A. N. (Reading); Baker, G. E. Lloyd (Joint Hon. Sec. of the Conference); Baker, Miss I. M. (Holborn and Metropolitan Asylums Board); Baker, Miss Ketha Lloyd; Bamforth, Lt.-Col. (Barnsley); Barber, J. L. P. (Burton-on-Trent); Barnes, H. (Edmonton); Bates, Colonel Arthur (Salvation Army); Bentham, F. H. (Bradford); Billinge, Jacob (St. Helens); Bloxam, F. Abel (London Diocesan Council for the Welfare of Lads); Bonnett, John J. (Brentford); Bousfield, Sir William (President of Conference); Bowring, Miss Emma (Toxteth Park); Boyd, George (Elham); Bracey, Mrs. (Birmingham); Brailsford, Miss Enid T. (Bradford); Braithwaite, Basil J. P. (Epsom); Bristow, Mrs. R. R. (Lewisham); Brown, William (Aston); Brudenell-Bruce, Lady Frederick (President of the National Association for the Welfare of the Feeble-minded); Buxton, Travers (Howard Association).

Calver, W. H. (Ipswich); Carter, John (Birkenhead); Chance, James Frederick; Chance, Margaret Anne; Chance, Sir William, Bart. (Hon. Sec. Central Committee of Poor Law Conferences, Hon. Treasurer of the Special Conference); Chisenhale-Marsh, Miss U. B. (Bishops Stortford); Clarke, Alexander (Romford); Clarkson, Miss M. (Norwich); Clay, Sir Arthur, Bart.; Clay, Mrs. Leah (Warrington); Clough, Rev. William (Barnsley); Cohen, Alderman S. (Kingston-upon-Hull); Conybeare, H. G. M. (Chelmsford); Cooke, Charles Castell (Aston); Cooper, H. I. (Bolton); Cordery, Mrs. E. J. (Poplar); Coutts, John (St. George's, Hanover Square); Cowie, Miss A. G. M. (St. George's-in-the-East); Cox, Charles W. (Maidenhead); Cox, Harold, M.P.; Craig, William (Remand Home, Camberwell Green).

Darracott, Francis (Aldershot and Farnham); Davies, Lt.-Col. T. W. (Hammersmith); Davies, Rev. Wilfred H. (Whitechapel); Dawson, William (Keighley); Dawson, William A. (Coventry); Deacon, John (Reading); Debenham, Mrs.; Digby, Lady (Colchester); Dobson, Samuel (Leeds); Dowding, Miss M. Keith (Chippenham); Dyke, Mrs. (Portsmouth); Dyter, John Thomas (Hampstead).

Edwards, Mrs. G. H. (Brentford); Eldridge, Mrs. Emily J. (Fulham); Elliott, Sir Charles A., K.C.S.I., and Lady Elliott; Elliott, Captain A. C.; Evans, Mrs. Matilda M. (Strand); Eve, Margaret A. (Notting Hill); Eveleigh, Mrs. H. J. (Hampstead, Charity Organisation Society, London).

Fairclough, Rev. W. H. H. (Burton-on-Trent); FitzSimmons, W. (Thames Police Court Mission of the C.E.T.S., London Diocese); Fleming, Sir Francis, K.C.M.G. (Kensington); Ford, James H. (Leeds); Foster, Edmond (Guildford); Frere, Miss Margaret; Fryers, Chas. W. (Sunderland).

Garrity, E. (Holborn); Gascoigne, Miss I. (St. George's, Hanover Square); Gladstone, Miss Helen (Warden of the Women's Univ. Settlement, Blackfriars); Glassey, Charles H.

(West Bromwich); Godfrey-Faussett, Miss H. (M.A.B.Y.S., Westminster Branch); Goldney, Rev. S. (Richmond, Surrey); Goode, A. (S. Australia); Gow, Miss H. J. (Southwark); Grant, Cardross (Bromley); Graves, Ellen (Hammersmith); Green, Edward (Hunslet); Green, Miss Norah E. (Nat. Union of Women Workers); Grubb, Edward (Howard Association).

Hadrill, H. J. (Bromley); Hale, Mr. S. M. (Southwark); Hall, Mrs. E. (Bromley); Hammond, Mrs. Mark (M.A.B.Y.S.); Hanson, Miss A. R.; Harris, Rev. H. K. (Chelmsford); Harrison, W. C. (Rotherham); Hart, Mrs. Henry; Harvey, E. H. (Swindon); Haslam, Dr. Kate (St. Mary, Islington); Haslehurst, Edward (Bromley); Hegan, Mrs. (Girls' Friendly Society); Hicks, Mrs. Lilian; Hodgson, Mrs. G. B. (South Shields); Holmes, T. (Howard Association); Hookham, George (Reading); Huggins, E. J. W. (Reading).

Irwin, Miss Margaret H. (Women's Trades Council, Scot.); Isaacs, Rev. F. W. (Brentford).

Jackson, Mrs. E. A. (Rotherham); James, A. A. (West Bromwich); James, R. Albert (Toxteth); James, Miss (Bethnal Green); Japp, Miss (Toxteth); Johnson, H. Lutman (M.A.B.); Jones, William (Toxteth).

Kensington, Miss F. (Society of Poor Law Workers); Kerrison, Miss (West Ham); Kerry, James (Edmonton); King, Councillor Griffin (Swindon); Kingswell, Mrs. (Portsmouth); Kleine, M. Marcel (Editor of "L'Enfant" and a probation officer, Paris); Knight, H. R. (Hunslet).

Lamb, Mrs. (Salvation Army); Leon, Mrs. Arthur L.; Lewis, J. P. (Greenwich); Lewis, William Gibson, Barrister-at-Law (Sec.); Lewis, Miss Elizabeth F.; Lister, W. V. (Eastry); Lord, J. Courtenay (Birmingham); Lyon, Miss C. C.

Macdonald, James (Manchester); Mackenzie, A. G. (Birmingham); Mackenzie, James (Willesden); Maddison, Arthur J. S. (Reformatory and Refuge Union and Children's Aid Society, 32, Charing Cross, S.W.); Martin, Joseph (South Shields); Mason, Miss (L.G.B.); Mather, George (Warrington); Medd, J. C. (Cirencester); Mee, F. W. (Hunslet); Meinertzhagen, Mrs. E. L. (Chelsea); Michael, Miss M. I. M. (St. Mary, Islington); Micholls, E. M. (Chalfont); Morris, Rev. J. C. (Lewisham); Mulgrew, John (Ormskirk); Murray, Bailie John Bruce (Glasgow).

Neville, Miss E. (Banstead); Nicholls (Bethnal Green).

Oakeshott, A. C. (Strood); O'Hagan, the Lady, and the Honourable Miss O'Hagan; Olphert, Rev. J. (Richmond, Surrey).

Packman, Mrs. A. (Strood); Palmer, T. W. (Wandsworth); Parkes, Miss (Aston); Parr, Robert J. (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children); Parr, Mrs. (Cadogan Place); Peden, Mrs. (Elham); Pell, Miss (L.G.B.); Perris, Mrs. A. E.;

4 LEGISLATION IN REGARD TO CHILDREN.

Philp, Miss (State Children's Aid Association); Phipps, Mrs. (Wilton); Pierce, Dr. W. A. (Birkenhead); Plews, Miss E. M. (Bethnal Green); Poole, Miss (Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants); Powell, Miss E. C. (Women's Univ. Settlement); Prichard, Rev. A. G. (West Ham); Pritchard, Miss Hilda; Proctor, Mrs. (Portsmouth).

Ravenhill, Miss; Rawson, Miss; Rendel, Miss E. (St. Pancras); Rhodes, John Milson, M.D. (Joint Hon. Sec. of the Conference and Chairman of the Central Committee of Poor Law Conferences); Rice, Henry E. H. (Eastry); Roberts, Muriel M. Adair (Frognaal, N.W.); Roberts, Mrs. M. E. (Bury, Lancs.); Roberts, Jos. (Bury, Lancs.); Roberts, Norah B. (Hampstead); Rothwell, Samuel (Bolton); Russell, Champion B. (Howard Association); Russell, G. H. (Manchester).

St. Hill, Miss (Women's Settlement); Saleeby, Dr. C. W. (London); Salt, F. W. (Ragged School Union); Sargeant, Joseph W. (Chorlton); Savege, James, M.D. (Sculcoates); Schneeli, Dr. (Zurich); Seckington, Henry (West Ham); Selwood, C. H. (Nottingham); Serle, Alfred T. (Willesden); Shannon, J. (Holborn); Sheppard, G. F., J.P. (St. Pancras); Shuttleworth, Dr. G. E.; Siddon, Miss (Huddersfield); Skitt, Charles (Leeds); Slack, Mrs. E. (Rotherham); Smith, Miss A. G. (M.A.B.Y.S.); Smith, A. Murray; Smith, R. T. (Homes for Motherless Children, Chiswick); Smith, T. Close (Romilly Society); Smith, W. R. (Norwich and District Trades and Labour Council); Stamford, the Earl of (Childhood Society); Stannard, Rev. Frederick R. (Sutherland Needy Children's Aid Society); Stead, Mrs. Bessie (Southwark); Sturdy, John (Leeds); Sutton, J. C. (Warrington).

Talbot, Miss Evelyn (Westminster); Templeton, Mrs. L. L. (Fulham); Tennant, H. J., M.P. (Bruton Street); Thomas, Hon. Mrs. (M.A.B.Y.S.); Thompson, C. E., J.P. (Sunderland); Thompson, William (Romilly Society); Tones, Miss (St. Pancras); Tootell, F. J. (Whitechapel); Turner, G. H. (Hampstead); Turner, J. R. (Birmingham); Tuska, Benjamin (Educational Alliance, New York); Tutty, James (Reading).

Unsworth, Colonel (Salvation Army).

Vallance, William, J.P. (M.A.B.); Vince, Mrs. (Birmingham).

Wade, Miss M. J. (Bradford); Ward, Miss Dorothy; Ward, Henry (West Bromwich); Ward, S. G. (Nottingham); Ward, Councillor Thomas (Nottingham); Wareham, E. J. (Sutherland Needy Children's Aid Society); Warren, C. H. (Chelsea); Warry, Miss K. A. (M.A.B.Y.S.); Watson, Mrs. S. A. (Greenwich); Webster, William (Bolton); Whitbread, F. P. (Deputy Vice-Chairman N.S.P.C.C.); White, Mrs. S. A. (Barnsley); Williams, Thomas O. (Aston); Wilson, George (Coventry); Wilson, James (Kingston-upon-Hull); Winter, R. H. (Kingston-upon-Hull); Worthy, J. A. (Wandsworth); Wright, Mrs. Bracey (Sutherland Needy Children's Society).

Yonge, Miss Charlotte.

The following Boards of Guardians subscribed :—

Aston, Barnsley, Bethnal Green, Birmingham, Bishops Stortford, Bolton, Brentford, Bridgend, Bromley, Burton, Bury, Canterbury, Chelmsford, Chorlton, Coventry, Cricklade and Wootton Bassett, Eastry, Edmonton, Elham, Epsom, Farnham, Fulham, Greenwich, Hammersmith, Hampstead, Holborn, Huddersfield, Hunslet, Ipswich, Islington, Keighley, Kingston, Kingston-upon-Hull, Leeds, Lewisham, Maidenhead, Manchester, Nottingham, Poplar, Portsmouth, Reading, Richmond, Romford, Rotherham, St. George's, Hanover Square, St. Pancras, Sculcoates, Southwark, South Shields, Strood, Sunderland, Swindon, Toxteth Park, Wandsworth, Warrington, West Bromwich, West Ham, Whitechapel, Willesden.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir William Bousfield), who was most cordially greeted on rising to deliver his presidential address, said :—

When the proceedings of the London meeting of this International Congress in 1902 came to an end, it was not expected that we should be again indebted to the hospitality of the Lord Mayor and Corporation for the next display of its vitality. In continuance to the successive triennial meetings at Florence, Buda-Pesth and London, it was agreed to accept the proposal of the representatives of German philanthropic societies that the Congress should re-assemble in Berlin in 1905. Unfortunately the Berlin friends of the movement for improving the condition of children were unable to arrange for receiving the Congress, and the London committee then resolved to summon this special Conference to consider one part only of the wide subject usually discussed by the Congress, namely, "Legislation in regard to Children." I feel much honoured in being asked to act as your President, and I hope that this interlude may assure its friends that the movement is not dead, and may encourage them to arrange a fully organised meeting of the Congress in the United States of America or in some other country where the lamp kindled by the love of children is brightly burning. The difficulties of organising an international congress are great. People interested in the common subject in various parts of the world have to be brought together, long notice has to be given them of the important questions relating to it which are to be discussed, experts have to be found to prepare and read papers, as well as to speak, foreign visitors must be welcomed and provided for, and nothing but a strong belief in the real efficacy of such gatherings in advancing the cause which they have at heart would nerve the supporters to take all the trouble necessary to make the Congress a success. Both in the Congress in 1902 and in this Conference the arrangements show the skilful and practised hands of Sir William Chance, Mr. Lloyd Baker, Dr. Rhodes and

Mr. Lewis. (Cheers.) They are all men who have done much for the benefit of children in various directions, and spare no trouble in bringing people to see the necessity of changes in law and usage where children suffer. (Cheers.) In turning over the reports of the previous meetings of the Congress it is impossible not to see how great has been the movement forward since they began in 1896, especially in the way men's and women's minds are directed towards improvements. Legislation naturally lays behind the formation of public opinion in every question of social reform, and it is well that it should do so. One of the great advantages of international congresses, Poor-law conferences and similar meetings, is that the principles underlying practical difficulties are gradually brought into prominence, and it is seen that legislation, if it is to be successful, must be conformable to the natural laws on which society is developed. There is always a danger that people who see evils should attempt to remedy them in a hand-to-mouth fashion, with a result sometimes worse than the original evil. Even when we have obtained our legislation, it does not follow that it produces the result we hope and expect. (Hear, hear.) The British Statute Book of late years is full of well-meant legislation attempting to improve the social condition of children and other classes, but with a number of these laws it has been found impossible to make much use of their provisions, and fresh attempts have had to be made to attain the object in another way. It seems vain to expect that enactments can be made effective unless they are adapted to the habits of the classes they affect, and are approved by current public opinion. Even the State, with all its power working through central and local administration, is practically limited in what it can effect, as the views of individual magistrates, the opinions of State officials themselves, and the conservatism of every-day people supply the gauge by which real working of new legislation is determined. I hope, therefore, this Conference, like others, may both seek for sound principles of action, and help to educate the public mind in the things with which it deals. (Cheers.) The conference may also, as I have no doubt it will, throw light upon details of work for children in many countries. Sound principle and popular sympathy will not do much unless administration is good. It is here that we have help from the people who give their lives and thoughts to the object they love. How much is the world indebted to the men or women, often unknown beyond a very small circle, who watch the lives often of a few children, say of a single school, or a class of blind, dumb, epileptic, or neglected children, and try to secure that each of them shall have its chance in life. (Cheers.) How much may be done by the single clerk of a board of guardians, by the chairman or a member of a school or charity organisation committee, a guardian of the poor, the secretary of a boys' or girls' club, or the workers of some of the

many societies for increasing the happiness and well-being of children, but how few of them are really satisfied with what they can effect. (Hear, hear.) We must work in hope. As was said by Earl Beauchamp—(Hear, hear)—in his presidential address at the last Congress meeting, “No greater encouragement or sweeter reward can be given to a social reformer and lover of mankind, than to show him that he is not uselessly struggling against apathy and ignorance, and to let him see the seed he has sown already putting forth leaves and unfolding the blossoms from which will issue the fruit that he desires.” (Cheers.) With all drawbacks there is progress. Every social reformer needs confidence and courage, though there may be moments of depression.

“With aching hands and bleeding feet
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone.
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 'twere done.
Not till the hours of light return
All we have built do we discern.”

(Cheers.) I will refer for a moment to some of the resolutions, of which there were twenty-one, under various headings, at the Congress in 1902. Much progress has been made by efforts for interesting the public in the instruction of women in rearing infants, the subject of a resolution based on the paper of Dr. Rocaz, of Bordeaux. It is to be made the subject of another conference to be held in London in June next. (Hear, hear.) The movement for reform in the method of treating youthful offenders has much advanced since 1902. In many centres, special remand homes and special sittings for the hearing of cases where children have to appear before the courts have been adopted, and a Bill has been introduced into Parliament to empower Courts of Summary Jurisdiction to separate children under sixteen from contact with the ordinary criminal. This subject will be discussed in to-day's sitting. In the United States an organised system of dealing with these cases has been widely adopted, including the release on probation of a great proportion of elder children charged with any offence. These reforms have been largely owing to the efforts of Mr. E. Fellows Jenkins (Secretary of the New York N.S.P.C.C.), one of the representatives from America at the last Congress, and other friends of children, prominent among them being Mrs. Dwight Sheffield, whose paper we shall hear to-day. (Cheers.) The first special courthouse for children was opened in New York in 1902. Elaborate and interesting statistics, showing the amount of juvenile crime, and the numbers of children having no natural guardians, their nationality and religion, are shown in the annual reports from New York, Chicago, Minnesota, and other districts. We shall look forward to the report of Mrs. Sheffield on this subject. (Hear, hear.) An attempt has also been made in Glasgow to organise a system of

probation officers for children, and I hope that Mr. Bruce Murray, who has taken great interest in these efforts, may be able to speak of them to the Conference. (Cheers.) The whole question is worthy of careful treatment, and it is possible that the difficulties which in 1902 seemed to me, amongst others, to place a bar upon the separate treatment of juvenile crime and punishment, may be avoided by skilful administration in large centres of population. Following resolutions of the last Congress, the late Government of Mr. Balfour appointed Royal Commissions on the Condition of the Feeble-minded and on Physical Deterioration, and a Departmental Committee on Vagrancy. Both of these Commissions have been the stimulus for fresh work, and I should like to bear testimony to the untiring energy with which the friends of the feeble-minded have endeavoured to organise suitable homes and methods of treatment for this unfortunate class. (Hear, hear.) The Commissioners on Physical Deterioration have, while dispelling some of the fears as to the inferiority of the modern city child to the youth of past centuries, shown that far more organised physical exercises and games in the open air are necessary under modern conditions than was the case when population was less crowded and the country lay within near reach of the majority of the people. (Hear, hear.) The Report of the Committee on Vagrancy (of which our honorary treasurer, Sir William Chance, is a valued member)—(cheers)—is a most valuable one, and this Conference must wish that its recommendations should pass into law as soon as possible. The only method of preventing the vagrant's child from following his father's steps is to remove him entirely from the father's control, and an industrial school will be his best reformer. Substantial progress has also been made since 1902 in remedying an evil dealt with in that Congress. Both in respect of street trading by children and the employment of children of school age, the advocates of reform at the Congress have been successful. By their personal efforts, they have secured regulations which have already reduced the demoralisation from these causes. (Hear, hear.) Much praise is due to Mr. Robert Peacock, the Chief Constable of Manchester, for what he has done. (Cheers.) I regret that he will be unable to attend the Conference. One of our principal subjects of discussion was scarcely touched at the last Congress meeting. The free feeding of children in elementary schools has attracted more attention since the mechanism of the schools themselves, their management and their relation to the State, have become the subject of legislation and political discussion. There are undoubted difficulties in dealing with a question where plausible arguments may be used by two opposing schools of thought. I hope that this Conference may tend to show the public what are the real facts of the case, what is the true proportion of children who are incapable from insufficient food to do their school work, and how

far the provision of food is beyond the power of their families. There has been great exaggeration in many of the estimates made as to underfed children, and from my own experience as a former member of the London School Board, and having myself provided meals for children in conjunction with the teachers for some period of time, I feel strongly that any wholesale method of dealing with this question, either by the local authorities or by private charity, is a serious evil. The method, always adopted by the congress, has been to treat each child individually, and while dealing with classes of children on general principles applicable to children falling within that class, to apply the remedy with careful consideration to the wants of each separate child taken in relation to its family life. (Hear, hear.) The Conference is fortunate in the presence of M. Marcel Kleine, who will describe the *Cantines Scolaires* of Paris—(Hear, hear)—and in having as writers of the papers Sir Charles A. Elliott and Miss Margaret Frere—(Hear, hear)—each of whom has long experience in dealing with the poor children of London schools. The selected speakers, Dr. Macnamara and Sir Arthur Clay, are also recognised authorities, though taking opposite views as to the extent to which feeding of school children is desirable in their own and the national interest. Many of those who attend this Conference are women. (Hear, hear.) They are all able to help forward our object to a greater extent than can men in many of the sides of children's life. Women's natural love must be the stay of children from earliest years, and society has no greater interest than to inspire sound principles and habits of life, and a reverent sense of responsibility in the opening mind. For the proper bringing up of children women need some knowledge of the laws of health, of modern discoveries of medical science affecting their diseases, and of the way in which a child's mind receives and uses outside impressions. The affection of the savage mother shows itself in teaching her child the barbarous and often cruel customs of her race. Here the duties of a mother are on a different plane. We have a long-civilised ancestry, and the work of a democratic age should be to spread the ideals which have always been held by the best and noblest through every grade of society. It is the spirit of the people and their standards of right and wrong which will always tell in the long run. Legislation may, by removing physical and social drawbacks, render possible a more civilised life for the lowest classes, and it is the object of this Conference to consider how this may best be done; but the principal and ultimate aim must be to secure for the rising generation a general sense of personal and national duty, with sufficient grit to act upon it. I welcome on behalf of the Congress all those who have honoured us by their presence from European countries, from the United States of America and from British colonies; and I hope that our deliberations may greatly assist the cause which we have at heart. (Cheers.)

REMAND HOMES.

BY MISS BAKER.

(Member of the Holborn Board of Guardians and of the Metropolitan Asylums Board.)

WE wish to call your attention to the need there is for reform in the treatment of juvenile offenders, and I regard it as a privilege to be allowed a share in pleading a cause I have so much at heart ; and at the same time I trust you will look on this paper as merely a preface to those which are to follow.

Prior to 1866, *all* children charged before a magistrate were, like adults, remanded to prison pending further inquiries, when such were necessary. The Industrial Schools Act of 1866 provided "that children charged before a magistrate with those offences which might be punished by sending the offender to an industrial school should be kept during remand, *not* in prison, but in a workhouse." This provision was considerably extended by the Reformatory School Act of 1893, which enabled a magistrate to direct "that a youthful offender who, in the opinion of the court, was less than sixteen years of age, might be taken to a prison or any other place" (any other place in practice still remained the workhouse). With the better administration of our poor law there came the awakening of those in authority to the fact that it was impossible to deal with juvenile offenders properly in the workhouse, for they were either placed with other children, to whom, in many cases, they were calculated to do grave harm, or if retained, as was more often the case, with the adult inmates, they were brought into contact with men of depraved character, and consequently left the workhouse the worse rather than the better for their stay.

I think it was in the year 1895 that the London guardians intimated their desire to be relieved of this

work, and the result of this request, together with the report of the Departmental Committee in 1896 on poor law children, led the Local Government Board to issue an order in April, 1897, imposing upon the Metropolitan Asylums Board the care of certain classes of London children, including those remanded from the police courts, and, in accordance with this order, the Metropolitan Asylums Board established three remand homes in London for the accommodation of juvenile offenders. It was then found that there were legal difficulties in the way of the magistrate sending children to the homes, and it was these difficulties that caused the Government to seek further legislation by the Act known as the "Youthful Offenders Act of 1901." The chief clause of this Act provides "that a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, on remanding or committing a child or other young person, may, instead of committing him to prison, commit or remand him to the custody of any fit person named in the commitment."

The London magistrates soon availed themselves of the Act, and from that date the Metropolitan Asylums Board homes have received *nearly* all the juvenile offenders on remand; and in passing it may interest you to know that the first child so sent to these homes was a little one of two years old. We have had several visits from London magistrates, who have all left remarks in the visitors' book bearing testimony to the usefulness of the homes.

Good as the Act is, it does not go far enough, for nothing should satisfy us which does not lead to the *entire* separation of the young offender from the hardened adult criminal. Taking the Act as it stands, we soon found in the working of it that there had been a grave omission, viz., that children could not be sent to the homes until *after* their first appearance before the magistrate; thus we still have children (many of whom have committed no crime but that of having been found wandering, lost, or in company

with bad parents) spending a night or more in the police station.

Statistics show that most criminals begin their career while young: many indeed before they know what crime is. Are we not largely responsible for this? Surely the necessary step of awakening self-respect in the young is not furthered by a stay in a police station! The notoriety of a police court trial, a journey to and from the police court and remand home in charge of a uniformed constable, or when a child has slept in a police station which may be some distance from a court, the ride in the police van commonly known as "Black Maria," are such disadvantages in the more receptive days of a child's life as must be apparent to us all. Ought not these children to be surrounded with safeguards rather than with pitfalls, and should we not bestir ourselves to awaken and foster their self-respect instead of deadening and exterminating the little that they have?

We found it was a common practice, that, if a child, boy or girl, under sixteen years of age, were arrested after the court had adjourned for the day, to place the child (no matter how young) in the station cells, often in the company of others, until the next day; or, if it happened on a Saturday, the offender was detained until the following Monday morning.

In the City of London children are still detained for the *first* night in the workhouse. At the present moment, owing to the agitation of those interested in this subject, together with the support of the Press, we have been able to bring public opinion to our aid, and this, with the kind support of Sir Edward Henry (the Chief Commissioner), has resulted in the number of very young children detained in the London police stations being very much reduced, though there has been a much larger number of lads between thirteen and sixteen years of age so detained, the figures being in 1904 and 1905 respectively:—Under 10

years, 53 and 37; beneath 10 and 13, 138 and 86; over 13, 194 and 293—Totals, 385 and 416.

During the last year some of the younger children have been put to sleep on the floor of the waiting room, which, to my mind, is quite as objectionable as the cells. With regard to the increase of those over thirteen, I have not the returns before me of boys remanded to prison last year, but I hope the increase in the homes means a decrease in the numbers sent to gaol. In London, as before stated, we have three homes, one at Camberwell, with accommodation for 40 boys and 10 girls; one at Pentonville Road, for 45 boys and 10 girls; and one at Harrow Road, for 45 boys. They are *homes*, *not* prisons, and beyond the fact that the outer doors are locked and the walls of the yards *very* high, there is nothing to suggest detention.

In the case of a constable bringing a boy or girl in, the history of the charge is first entered, and the child is then taken to the bath room, washed and dressed in clean clothes and passed into the home. As far as possible the children are classified, the elder boys and girls being kept apart from the younger ones, and those of bad character are not permitted to associate with the others. The rooms in which they sleep are ordinary-sized rooms, so that they can be divided at night according to the separation carried on during the day. The children rise at 6.30 a.m., make their own beds and tidy the rooms. At 8 a.m. they have their breakfast, and at 8.30 the big boys and girls are set to work in different parts of the house, under the personal supervision of one of the officers, while the younger ones have three-quarters of an hour's play. All the children go into school from 10.45 to 12, except those of very bad character; these are kept entirely separate from the others. After school they have drill and recreation; dinner at 1 o'clock; school from 2 to 4 p.m.; tea at 5. The evening is spent in games and story

books. It is most important:—1. That they should always be employed either at work or play. 2. That at no time should they be left without the presence of an officer.

One great gain of the remand home system has been the personal touch of the officials, who get to know the children, their histories and surroundings, and the cause of their offences, if any. I think I may say that this has been of assistance to the magistrates, who often send for the superintendents to make inquiries about a case. Also, we are now beginning to see the result of this personal touch, for our superintendents are constantly receiving visits or letters from the boys and girls, thanking them for their kindness, and saying, "the time spent in the remand home was the turning point in their lives." And from time to time the young soldier or sailor appears, to show with pride the good conduct badge won by him, and remarks: "I promised you, governor, if I got off, I would go straight, and you see I have kept my promise." I should like to give you one extract from many letters received: "I write you these few lines, hoping to find you quite well. I was in the home in December, 1902. You gave us boys good advice, and I have got on well since. I am chief petty officer in the captain's cabin," etc.

Let me give you the history of a girl a little over sixteen and a half years who, whilst I am writing this paper, is under detention in one of our prisons. When fifteen and a half years old she was charged with attempting her life at Norwich, and *remanded to prison* for three months, to await her trial; at the end she was sentenced to one month with hard labour. Since that date, November, 1904, she has been sentenced ten or eleven times to prison, the sentence varying from one month to six months' hard labour, her offence generally being that of breaking windows. In February of this year I wrote a history of the case to the magistrate, and he kindly gave her a long remand

and then discharged her. She promised to reform, stating that she had never been so happy as when in the remand home. After a stay of three weeks she ran away, and was again arrested on the Embankment, where she had gone with the intention of taking her life. The police, finding money upon her, accused her also, for the first time, of immoral practices. When brought before the magistrate at Guildhall, who, fortunately for her, was a doctor as well as a magistrate, he gave great care and attention to the poor girl's case, consulting with the remand home's doctor and matron, with the result that he considered it a case of mania, which occurred from time to time, and he ordered her to be kept under observation in the prison infirmary. Had this poor girl been sent to a remand home in the first instance and not to a gaol how different might have been her life.

Take another instance :—Mary M——, fifteen and a half years, arrested in Kensington Workhouse for having stolen a petticoat and a blouse at Southend, was taken to Vine Street Police Court for a night, and next day was sent with a young policeman to Southend. A Kensington lady guardian, a friend of mine, interested in the case, followed the girl down, and was told she would be tried next day, and that the magistrate was inclined to discharge her could a suitable home be provided for her. The girl stated that a lady had visited her at Vine Street and offered her a home, with wages of 6s. a week, should she be discharged. My friend undertook to visit the house and wire as to the fitness of the situation. On going to the address given she immediately discovered that it was a house of bad repute, and afterwards learnt from the detective that the would-be mistress had been in custody at Vine Street with the girl, where she was well known as a bad character.

I hope my short paper has made you all feel that we must not stand still, but must press on for further

legislation in a matter which is so essential to the well-being of our children. I look forward to the time when :

1. The provision of proper accommodation by local authorities for children and young persons under detention *shall* be compulsory.

2. That the remand homes *shall* be available for the period between arrest and the first appearance before a magistrate, and

3. That the time of remand *shall* be extended beyond the seven days now existent, to obviate the necessity of the children being sent backwards and forwards.

I should like to say very much more to show you the grave harm done by mixing the young with the adults, but I cannot do so without trespassing on a matter which rightly belongs to those who are to follow me, and who are much more able to state the case than myself.

Before I conclude, may I draw your attention to the statistics which are appended to this paper? They are sad reading, but nevertheless interesting and instructive. It is encouraging to notice that there has been a steady decrease in the numbers admitted to our homes during the last three years. In the year 1903 there were 2,285 ; in 1904, 2,252 ; whilst in 1905 there were only 1,987. May I end by an earnest appeal that all here will use their influence, and endeavour to right the wrong that is being done to Christ's little ones.

TABLE SHOWING NUMBER OF CHILDREN ADMITTED DURING THE YEAR
1905 TO EACH HOME.

Home.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Camberwell Green	594	124	718
Harrow Road	319	...	319
Pentonville Road	773	177	950
Total	1,686	301	1,987

The ages of the children admitted during the year 1905 were:—Under 9, 406; between 10 and 13, 920; between 14 and 16, 627; over 16, 34; total, 1,987.

SYNOPSIS OF TABLE SHOWING THE SCHOOLS ATTENDED BY THE CHILDREN PRIOR TO ARREST DURING 1905.

School.	At Camberwell Green.	At Harrow Road.	At Pentonville Road.	Total.
County Council schools . . .	478	159	600	1,237
" " " (special)	...	...	7	7
Church of England schools . .	105	81	124	310
Roman Catholic schools . . .	92	44	118	254
Truant schools	12	2	...	14
Industrial schools	2	5	36	43
Total (inclusive of schools not shown)	718	319	950	1,987

SYNOPSIS OF TABLE SHOWING THE OFFENCES WITH WHICH THE CHILDREN WERE CHARGED DURING 1905.

Charges.	Camberwell Green.	Harrow Road.	Pentonville Road.	Total.
Felony	266	123	...	389
Larceny	11	...	52	63
Begging	112	90	111	313
Beyond control	50	24	28	102
Unlawful possession	6	5	18	29
Wandering	169	46	294	509
Burglary and house-breaking	9	4	30	43
Found on enclosed premises .	15	5	...	20
Residing in a house of ill-fame	51	1	29	81
Sleeping out . . . . .	...	7	10	17
Stealing . . . . .	...	...	263	263
Total (inclusive of offences not specified)	718	319	950	1,987

18 LEGISLATION IN REGARD TO CHILDREN.

TABLE SHOWING THE RESULT OF THE LAST APPEARANCE OF THE CHILDREN BEFORE THE MAGISTRATE DURING 1905.

Result.	Camberwell Green.	Harrow Road.	Pentonville Road.	Total.
Discharged to homes	215	101	301	617
Birched	8	8	15	31
Fined or bound over	53	33	124	210
Taken by police court missionary	13	14	...	27
Sent to reformatory or industrial training ships.	58	23	57	138
Sent to reformatory or industrial or truant schools	354	131	377	862
Total (inclusive of cases not specified)	718	319	950	1,987

TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO SLEPT IN POLICE STATION CELLS PRIOR TO ADMISSION TO THE HOMES DURING 1905.

Ages.	Camberwell Green.	Harrow Road.	Pentonville Road.	Total.
Under 10 years	11	22	4	37
Between 10 and 13 years	34	30	22	86
Over 13 years	111	71	111	293
Total	156	123	137	416

CHILDREN'S COURTS AND PROBATION OFFICERS.

By Miss ADLER.

(Co-opted Member of the Education Committee of the L.C.C.)

THE question which we are about to discuss does not involve any far-reaching measures of reform. For nearly half a century our Legislature has recognised the principle, though perhaps somewhat grudgingly, that penal methods alone do not ensure the reformation of the youthful offender, and that educative

treatment outside the prison walls is necessary as a means of prevention, both in his own interests and in those of the community. But although something has been accomplished, much remains to be done. It is true that private benevolence, coupled with generous aid from the State, has raised up a large number of institutions for the care and education of these neglected and delinquent children. It is true also that these organisations are supplemented by residential and day industrial schools maintained by local authorities. The cost of these preventive institutions reaches over £600,000 per annum. And yet, despite all this effort, there is a definite feeling among those who are brought into contact with the children of our great cities, that there is much room for improvement, and that our criminal statistics point to the need for further preventive measures. We find an increase of 3 per cent., or of 1,516 persons, tried for serious offences during 1904 against the number in 1903, a tendency in the number of juvenile prisoners to rise, 110 more of them in 1904 than in 1903, and an increase of 1,031 young prisoners between 16 and 21 years.

The absence of any special provision for the trial of youthful offenders is held to be practically responsible for this regrettable increase in juvenile delinquency. The girl or lad under 16, and even 21, is held by all psychological experts to be in a formative stage as to character. There are no criminals under 21, one authority on the subject said some months ago, and there is little doubt that wise advice and active help at the time of the first offence might do much to prevent further lapses. But how do we treat our youthful offenders now, to say nothing of the children? At the present moment in London, and indeed all over the country, with the notable exceptions of Manchester, Birmingham, Bradford, Bury, and Bolton, the youthful offender is brought into the ordinary police-court, possibly, if his case is

heard first on the list, through a long line of prisoners awaiting trial. Then there is the full blaze of publicity; the magistrate sits high above him, to the nervous, shrinking child, a stern judge wielding punishment; to the hardened offender, an enemy to be deceived, if possible, with brazen face. To neither does he seem what he often is, and probably always desires to be, the friend and helper. Out of touch frequently with child life, he is apt to regard the merely mischievous lad, whom the perusal of penny-dreadfuls and a spirit of adventure has launched into some serious pilfering, as an adult "ne'er do well," and packs him off to prison for six weeks or two months, whence he emerges in all probability deteriorated in mind and body, having lost that wholesome fear of prison life which is happily planted in the youthful mind. It is far different when the boy or girl is brought before the children's court. Those who have sat on the bench, both here and in America, are impressed with the ease with which the children's magistrate gets at the truth from the juvenile delinquent. For it must not be thought that criticism of our present methods of dealing with youthful offenders is due to the opinions of educational enthusiasts or irresponsible faddists. The most strenuous denunciation of the system is to be found in the Reports of the Commissioners of Prisons, more especially in those for 1903 and 1905. I hope I shall be forgiven, if I quote from these Reports at some length. "The Chaplain of Pentonville Prison calls attention to the large number of small boys sent there for childish offences, football in the streets, throwing stones, etc., and he mentions the case of an undersized urchin of 15, who got fourteen days for assaulting the police, and records the opinion, with which we agree, that no boy under 16 is sent to a large London prison without injury to himself, and to the community at large." The Chaplain of Plymouth Prison records his protest against sending young

offenders to prison instead of reformatories. We call attention to these two cases where strong opinions are expressed by our chaplains (which are generally shared throughout the service), which point to a tendency not to take full advantage of the great opportunities offered by the Reformatory Acts, and cases have been brought to our notice during the year, which lead us to suppose that this might be the case." London, it should be added, has a particularly bad record in regard to the number of juveniles sent to prison.¹

Some further experiences of the various chaplains may be of interest. "I deeply regret to observe," says the Chaplain of Northampton, "that the number of juvenile prisoners is on the increase. We received just double the number during the past year that we did in the preceding year." "No more effective method could be devised for turning unruly youngsters into habitual criminals," says the Chaplain of Warwick Prison, "than a prolonged course of short sentences. The short sentence has been conclusively proved to be so glaringly futile, that it is strange and most regrettable that it should still be regarded with favour by so many magistrates and others." More than half of these lads are sent to prison in default of the payment of a fine. In the 1903 Report, the Commissioners state that: "Enquiries which we made as to the particulars of certain boys have furnished us with some startling examples of the circumstances and system under which it is possible for a juvenile to have undergone imprisonment as many as thirty times, and to have been the subject of forty-one convictions. . . . It must occur to anyone who desires to see the punishment for youthful delinquency carried out according to humane and rational principles, that the

¹ In Pentonville during 1904 there were imprisoned 1 boy under 12 and 116 under 16 years; in Wandsworth, 1 boy under 12 and 106 under 16 years; in Wormwood Scrubs, 17; in Brixton, 5; in Holloway women's prison, 2; a total of 248 under 16 years.

methods illustrated by this case cannot be the best. We venture to think they are the worst."

What are the remedies for this unsatisfactory state of things? Two effective means of dealing with this difficult problem present themselves. Firstly, separate courts for children's cases, with the appointment of magistrates, specially selected, sitting for the purpose. This, it will be remembered, was a recommendation put forward by the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Secondly, the appointment of probation officers.

With the provision of the separate court we should not see, as we do at present, innocent children, whose only crime is their friendlessness and destitution, brought into the unsavoury surroundings of the police court. We might hope instead to find the more homely atmosphere of the provincial courts which have adopted this reform, where discharge under suspension of sentences is freely used, because there is no risk involved in bringing the child to court from time to time as an assurance of his good behaviour. Moreover, as has been said before, every judge, both here and in America, who has sat in a children's court, speaks of the comparative ease of getting at the truth if you speak to a child face to face.

But of equal importance with the institution of the children's court, is the appointment of the probation officer. For his duty is not only to watch over and to act as friend and guardian of the child when released on parole or suspension of sentence, but to make every enquiry as to the home conditions of the family, endeavouring not only to keep the child on the right path, but to improve its environment.

Here, again, public opinion receives the warm support of the Prisons Commissioners. In advocating the French system of suspension of sentence pending probation, they affirm that they believe that the absence of such a system "is responsible for much unnecessary commitment to prison, especially in the

case of young offenders and others guilty of petty offences." There is little doubt also that the placing of young offenders in the care of kindly, sympathetic men and women, would obviate the need for resorting to that most undesirable form of punishment, whipping, of which 2,381 instances took place in 1904. Some enquiries which are now being made as to the deterrent effect or otherwise of this penalty seems to point to its utter uselessness in preventing in many cases repetition of the offence, and to show that the delinquent finds his way before long to the industrial school. Such a punishment produces no strengthening of character. The child merely sees in the law but one more demonstration of the brutality of his environment.

In Scotland special arrangements have been introduced for the treatment of juvenile offenders at Glasgow and Greenock.

1. The trial of youthful offenders does not take place at the ordinary sittings of the court.

2. No child under sixteen, unless in exceptional circumstances, may be confined in the ordinary police cells previous to trial, a point of great importance in the reform of procedure in regard to youthful criminals. The Manchester court has the same regulation.

3. The district superintendents are encouraged to deal with trifling offences without bringing them into court.

4. Probation officers are in daily attendance for the purpose of receiving the instructions of the presiding magistrate on such cases as may seem suitable for probation. The first case dealt with on these lines was that of a lad of seventeen, who, on October 22, 1905, was placed under the supervision of an officer for using unseemly language.

It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to reiterate the fact, which is, I think, now generally known, that children's courts were instituted in South Australia in 1895, when the State Children's Act established a State

Children's Council, in Canada in 1894 and in New South Wales in 1905. In each instance the law provides for the care of the children while awaiting trial: in South Australia on the premises of the State Children's Department, and in Canada usually in homes carried on under the auspices of the Children's Aid Society. The cases of children under twelve may be heard in the premises of the society instead of in the children's courts. Of the great success which has attended the institution of separate courts and the release of children under the care of probation officers in the United States, you will be told in another paper. Nineteen States have special courts and probation officers, in four others parole laws are in existence and are applied to all children's cases. In last month's *Juvenile Court Record*, an interesting description is given of the co-ordination of voluntary with professional work at the San Francisco court, where the probation committee and auxiliary committee aid the work of the court and of the probation officers by investigating the institutions which receive the children committed to the court, find homes for the children, clothing for them, tabulate and compile statistics, deal with adult cases and endeavour to obtain employment for boys and girls in need of it.

Vigorous efforts are now being made to secure the passing this session of the Summary Jurisdiction (Children) Act, which has been introduced by Mr. Tennant, and is backed by influential members on both sides of the House. Clause 1 provides that children must be tried in some place other than the ordinary court room. Clause 2 extends Section 4 of the Youthful Offenders Act, 1901, to the period prior to trial, so as to enable juvenile delinquents to be placed in some place other than a police-station cell. Clause 3 embodies provisions of the First Offenders Act, 1887, which were approved by the House of Commons but dropped by the House of Lords. They

enable children under conditional release to be placed under the supervision of an official of the court, the court missionary or some society willing to undertake the work.

The value of the procedure which is here suggested can scarcely be overrated. It is earnestly to be hoped that, in a Parliament pledged to reform, this modest measure, the enactment of which is likely to save thousands of children from crime and suffering, will not be allowed to perish among the derelict Bills of the session.

By MR. COURTENAY LORD, J.P. (BIRMINGHAM).

As is no doubt well known to most of those here, a great deal of attention is being devoted at present to the mode of dealing with youthful offenders, in order to bring home to them in a forcible manner the necessity of avoiding the downward course, whilst at the same time saving them where possible from a conviction. Those who are not more or less intimately connected with the administration of justice, or who have so far not taken any share of the work of prisoners' aid and kindred societies, can scarcely realise the full meaning of a first conviction. It practically means the ruin of a young life, and in many cases the manufacture of an habitual criminal.

One of those who have taken the deepest interest in juvenile courts is Judge Lindsay, of Denver, Colorado, and he says: "It is not right to brand these children with the name of criminals when they are for the most part enterprising youths who have not been taught the ideal of right doing."

He allows in his court no written record that will ever come up against the man when he has passed the irresponsible time of boyhood.

Another important point to be remembered is that such a conviction may often be the result of a trivial

offence committed through ignorance or thoughtlessness, and frequently with the connivance, if not through the instigation, of the parents or guardians. These things have been brought home to me very forcibly during a period of over twenty-five years, during which I have exercised the functions of a city magistrate in Birmingham, thirteen years of which I have acted as a member of the visiting committee of His Majesty's prisons at Winson Green, where we usually have from 7,000 to 8,000 per annum prisoners, and more forcibly still by what I have seen and heard in the Children's Court in Birmingham, which was opened some thirteen months ago. This brings me more closely to the main point upon which I wish to centre your attention to-day, viz., children's courts.

In order more fully to understand the necessity for these institutions, I must call your attention specially to the number of offences which have sprung into existence through the numerous bye-laws which are necessary for the proper government of our large cities, and which in former years were little thought of, and even at present are seldom looked on as offences in country districts. I refer to such things as disorderly conduct, playing such games as peg-top, tip-cat, and football in the streets, etc. Then again, take another group, card-playing, gambling and pitch and toss, offences against the Vagrancy Act: all most objectionable practices, but often the result of bad companionship, parental neglect, and the instigation of one bad spirit amongst a number of otherwise innocent lads.

It is true their offences may be purged by a small fine, but if that fine is not forthcoming there is only one course open to the magistrate, a committal to a gaol, which counts as a conviction, leading to a consequent loss of character and frequently to a series of further crimes, because the boy is looked on as a bad sheep, and few hands are held out to help him. For the purpose of my argument, offending children,

for I can scarcely bring myself to call them criminals, at any age up to sixteen, may be classed as follows :—

1. Mischievous children.
2. Children who commit crimes because of temptation.
3. Children who commit crimes because of environment and bad associations.
4. Children who commit crimes because of parental neglect or incompetency.
5. Children with what may be called criminal tendencies.
6. Children who are runaways and vagrants.
7. Disorderly and ungovernable children.
8. Children who are neglected or abused by their parents.

It is for these I raise my plea. It is for these I earnestly appeal to you to assist wherever you have any influence in organising and opening special children's courts, and in forming a corps of suitable probation officers who will undertake and carry out conscientiously the duty of looking after these young people during their probationary time, making the children and their parents feel that they are their friends, not their censors, and doing all in their power to lead them in the right way, pointing out to them the pitfalls which are ever open to them, and by encouragement and kindly advice showing them how these things may best be avoided. Thus I feel sure we shall be able to check crime in the bud ; thus we shall be able to divert many from the downward path ; thus and thus only shall we be able to raise up an honourable and healthy race of young men, instead of allowing them to gradually sink lower and lower in the social scale, until they swell that great crowd of criminals who are a terror to our people and who eventually become habitual inmates of our prisons and asylums at such a heavy cost to our country and a disgrace to our boasted civilisation. It would be Utopian to suppose that we can eliminate crime, but

we can do much to lessen it; and it is far better to spend our energy in endeavouring to stop crime at the spring than to attempt the stay of it when in full flood. In Birmingham we do not for one moment lay claim to originating the system, which I am led to understand was first thought of in Canada, and afterwards adopted in the United States of America, and from both these countries I have received and read voluminous reports which prove the efficiency of the system; but the motto of our city is "Forward," and we are always ready to accept anything which we find on careful enquiry is likely to be for the public good, and we have every reason from our experience to feel that we have done the right thing in establishing the children's court. It is perfectly true that in some places it may be more or less difficult, and in other places almost impossible, to carry out the plan, but we are singularly fortunate in the magnificent building we possess in our Victoria Courts, which give us every facility for carrying out the work thoroughly, and we have also a large bench of magistrates who are willing, nay eager, to devote the additional time which is necessary to carry out the scheme successfully. Our proceedings are as follows, viz.: that on every Thursday the children's court opens at ten o'clock, *i.e.*, one hour before the ordinary criminals' court opens. The offenders enter by a separate door from that used by the general body, and on entering they are sorted into two waiting-rooms, with their parents or guardians, who are summoned with them, those for minor offences against bye-laws being placed in one room, those for more serious offences in another. This I consider a most important point, as it from the first stops the possibility of intercourse between offenders of different grades. Each offender is then brought into the court room, accompanied only by those who are connected with the case, and as the court opens early there are seldom any of the public present except those kind friends who are for the present acting as

probation officers and are willing to help us in looking after young people during their time of probation. This we find an excellent plan, because the children are much more likely to tell the truth than when surrounded by an army of officials and awed by the presence of the general public. As soon as a case has been heard and decided upon, the offender is removed, so that no young person has the opportunity of hearing the cases against another, and no boy or girl brought up for a trivial offence has the opportunity of hearing (in court at least) how easy it is to commit a greater crime. These are the proceedings of our children's court, but this is by no means the end of the matter. The final and the most important work lies in the hands of the probation officer, who is to look after the young offenders during their time of probation, and who I trust may be so well selected that they shall become their friends for life. In my own opinion, and this is also the opinion of those in other countries where the system is in vogue, the probation officer should in no case be a policeman, for though many of these excellent officers may be admirably fitted for the work, I feel sure that the fact that the child is being looked after by a policeman would at once be resented by the parents, and would also naturally obstruct our ultimate aim, by making the young people feel that they were being watched by officers of the law, and it would also institute a system of espionage which those of us who take a deep interest in this question feel would be the means of defeating the main object we have in view. I think the selection and appointment of these probation officers, both male and female, should be left in the hands of the local magistrates having charge of these courts, as they are the best judges of the requirements of the locality, and that they should be answerable to and subject to dismissal by them, but that they should be paid by the State or out of the rates of the district where they are employed, as a separate corps to be called if it be

thought right. Probation officers to be in reality children's friends. How much is summed up in these two words, "children's friends," is also too little known to many who have no idea of these poor young ones' surroundings, no idea of their temptations, and no idea of the troubles and sorrows of their early lives, which would be so often softened if they could only have one true friend to whom they could unburden themselves, one true friend to whom they could turn in their hour of need.

During the twelve months that our children's court has been in operation in Birmingham we have dealt with some 828 juvenile offenders, with gratifying results. This we deem distinctly satisfactory, and in many cases a few kindly words of advice from the magistrates have, as far as we know, had the effect of preventing a repetition of the offence without the disgrace of a conviction.

Of course, there have been many cases where the gaol or reformatory school have had to be resorted to, but we feel that our children's court had a good deal to do with the fact that, whilst in 1904 203 juvenile offenders entered the Birmingham prison, in 1905 there were only 72.

So far our probation officers have been kindly disposed ladies and gentlemen who have volunteered for the work, but though doubtless in smaller areas volunteer efforts can successfully cope with the demand, in cities like Birmingham, where large numbers of offenders have to be dealt with, it is absolutely necessary that carefully selected paid officers should be appointed.

In conclusion, allow me to express a hope that those of you who are interested in this great question of the best mode of dealing with juvenile offenders, will use every legitimate effort to cause children's courts to be established throughout the United Kingdom, and I feel sure that your thus interesting yourselves will be a source of comfort and happiness

to you, when looking at the success which has been achieved in the bringing up of your own children, you are able to feel that you are doing something to improve the condition of children less happily situated, whose offences are so frequently caused by ignorance, bad surroundings, and the utter carelessness of their parents as to the condition of their future lives.

BAILIE JOHN BRUCE MURRAY (Glasgow) said that the conference would no doubt be interested to learn what was being done in Glasgow. Public attention in Glasgow was directed to the matter about a year ago by various means, including reports from America, and the question of probation guardianship came to the front. A Committee of the Town Council was appointed to investigate, and the result of that enquiry established several facts. First, it was made clear that the powers contained in the existing laws had not been utilised to the full extent possible. Secondly, there was established the comparative failure of the provisions of the First Offenders Act. That failure was due to the want of provisions for looking after first offenders when released, and also due to the practice in Scotland, believed to be in accordance with the law, of not requiring the offender to appear before the court again unless a new offence was committed. A result had been that offenders when given the benefit of the First Offenders' Act believed they were let off, and that as long as they kept out of the clutches of the police they were all right. But now, in view of the more enlightened interpretation of the Act, and in view of the institution of the probation officer, a different system had been adopted, that of requiring the offender to appear upon a given day to receive sentence. In Glasgow they had been thoroughly convinced of the uselessness of short sentences and imprisonment in default of the payment of fines. One recommendation of the Glasgow Committee on that point was being observed, viz., that by inflicting smaller fines and allowing time for payment the necessity for imprisonment was decreased. A result of that had been a material diminution in the number of offenders committed to prison. With regard to the probation officers, every one who had spoken to-day had admitted the necessity of these as an adjunct to children's courts. In Glasgow they had appointed nine probation officers, one to each of the nine courts in the city. These officers were selected policemen, and the reason policemen had been chosen was because of expense. The appointment of these selected policemen involved little additional expense beyond putting them into plain clothes. (Laughter.) As

far as the experiment had gone, the results had been eminently satisfactory. He admitted that the training of a policeman was such as to disqualify him in some ways for service as a probation officer, but on the other hand, it was certain that the training of a police officer, and knowledge he obtained of offenders and criminals, had been of great advantage, more particularly in the case of adult offenders. Unfortunately, the Glasgow arrangements were not yet complete. It was intended, and hoped, that the probation officer would simply be an officer to arrange for sub-guardians, representatives of societies and other individuals to act under him, but so far this arrangement had not been carried out in Glasgow. This was due to a certain amount of apathy on the part of the public and a little prejudice in regard to probation officers on the part of those connected with the courts. Those conditions must be changed, and nothing would tend more to effect improvement than the publication of reports of such conferences as this. (Hear, hear.) Statistics as to actual results were not available, but there was information to show that a larger percentage of cases than they had hoped for had turned out satisfactorily. For instance, one of the Committee's recommendations was that district superintendents of police, in dealing with children, should not deal with them in court but in their own rooms. This system had been adopted with marked success, and large numbers of children had been dealt with effectively without being brought into court at all. There was, however, one serious drawback to the full operation both of probation officers and children's courts, viz., the want of legislation. There were some serious doubts on the part of those connected with the courts as to how far it was right for a judge to deal with the offender, whether man, woman or child, when brought up for sentence. It was held by some that the new evidence of the probation officer, obtained after sentence, must not be allowed to prejudice the accused. It was also held to be contrary to the law and un-English to allow probation officers to interrogate prisoners with a view to finding out their circumstances and surroundings before trial. There was no power to do this under the existing law, but it was done with great advantage in America. He strongly urged the desirability of obtaining similar powers to those so beneficially exercised in America. The President in his address had properly pointed out that legislation should not precede but should follow public opinion, and it was the duty of that conference to formulate that public opinion, expressing the desire on the part of those connected with the administration of the law for the reforms required, and to press for legislation. (Cheers.)

The following paper by Mrs. Sheffield (formerly Probation Officer of the City of New York) was then read. (Mrs. Sheffield, as Miss Ada Eliot, read a paper on the same subject at the International Congress in 1902.)

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF THE PROBATION SYSTEM IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY MRS. DWIGHT SHEFFIELD.

Springfield, Mass., U.S.A., formerly Probation Officer of the City of New York.)

THE juvenile court, with the probation system which is considered its backbone, continues to spread rapidly in the United States. Its success, which so far is indisputable and in some cases even conspicuous, inspires progressive persons in State after State to urge this reform upon their respective Legislatures. Each State profits by the experience and experiments of those that have gone before in the movement.

An interesting, and what is considered wherever it has been tried to be a valuable, addition to the laws dealing with delinquent children is what is known as the "contributory delinquency" law. Cases coming under this law are tried in the children's court. The law as it stands in the State of Colorado is as follows:—

"In all cases where any child shall be a delinquent child or a juvenile delinquent person, as defined by the statute of this State, *the parent or parents*, legal guardian, or person having custody of such child, *or any other person* responsible for or by any act encouraging, causing or contributing to the delinquency of such child, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon trial and conviction thereof shall be fined in a sum not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or imprisoned in the county jail for a period not exceeding one (1) year, or by both such fine and imprisonment. The court may impose conditions upon any person found guilty under this Act, and as long as such person shall comply therewith to the satisfaction of the court the sentence imposed may be suspended."

Judge Lindsey, of the juvenile court in Denver Colorado, writes the following description of his administration of this law :—

“A certain father had neglected his boy, knowingly letting him go to a saloon without forbidding it; in fact, encouraging it. This boy often saw men in the saloon drinking, swearing, gambling, and using obscene language. Example is everything in a child's life. In this case the father was sentenced to thirty days in the county jail for contributing to the delinquency of his boy. The conditions imposed were that he spend three days in the county jail, and the rest of the sentence was suspended on condition that the boy be kept out of the saloon, stay at home nights, and go to school regularly. The father went to jail Saturday night and was let out on Monday morning, a sadder but wiser man. The effect was just as good as three months in jail. Not only did this boy cease to visit saloons, but the children of other families ceased to do the same thing. The one example had a salutary effect in an entire section of the city. We have often fined fathers and mothers \$25 and costs for various delinquencies of their children. A frequent instance is where children are on the railroad tracks stealing coal, or in the box-cart stealing fruit, jeopardising not only their lives and limbs but their morals as well. . . . Sometimes we suspend the fine on condition that the child is never again reported by the officer for repeating the offence. Only about two out of 100 children thus dealt with are brought back for a repetition of the offence. We may insist that \$5 of the fine be paid and the balance remitted on the same conditions. The law is elastic, and there is plenty of opportunity for tact and good judgment, which must be used if success is to be attained. . . . The railroad officials tell us that children on the tracks and depredations from boys have decreased 90 per cent. since we began to make examples of some of those responsible.”

Judge Lindsey is not only heart and soul interested in his work, but has an unusual aptitude for understanding and influencing boys. While it is not to be expected that many others will equal him in this gift, painstaking conscientiousness on the part of any intelligent judge will accomplish something at least of the same results.

For the last three years Indianapolis, Indiana, has been trying an experiment in an extended use of volunteers for the supervisory part of its juvenile probation work. Investigation of the children's environment, school record, etc., is done by the paid agents of the court. The chief probation officer has a list of business and professional men, and of a smaller number of ladies, who have agreed to serve as volunteer probation officers for a few cases. One of these persons is asked to be present at the trial of any child whom the investigation has shown to be a likely subject of probation, and after trial the court places such child in charge of the volunteer, and gives this volunteer the usual powers of a probation officer over the delinquent. The boy, for it is usually a boy, must then report regularly to him, and he visits the boy, reporting progress once a month to the court. Indianapolis is well pleased with this plan, which, besides the greater attention that it may bring to each probationer, has the additional advantage of saving expense to the State.

Many persons familiar with probation work are sceptical as to the quality of work done by volunteers, and although I hold myself open to a change of opinion, I confess to sharing this scepticism. The volunteers as persons may be superior to the paid officials, but in the United States, where there is no leisured class, they are sure to be persons who have many other legitimate calls upon their time and thought, and consequently, after the first enthusiasm has passed, unless there is some personal incentive to faithfulness, their work is liable to become desultory.

There is no particular intellectual interest in the oversight of from one to three delinquent children, and any prestige that may attend such work would appear to be too slight to serve as a continuous spur. There is much philanthropic work for which volunteer service is suitable, and indeed imperative, but it has not seemed to me that that of supervising wrongdoers was one of them. The responsibility to the public, especially while the whole system is still experimental, is too great to warrant the risk of neglect. Officers remunerated by private individuals or societies, instead of by the State, I do not include in this limitation of the field for volunteers.

Several cities, Indianapolis included, are desirous of arranging for medical inspection of delinquent children. The probation officers consider that waywardness is frequently aggravated, if not occasioned, by physical causes that should be located and if possible removed, as much for the sake of the public as for the sake of the child. Chicago has lately made a number of district nurses probation officers of the juvenile court.

The Governor of New York State appointed a commission in the autumn of 1905 to investigate probation in that State and to report recommendations. The most notable recommendation of this commission, made after a thorough study of the situation, is that of unpaid municipal probation commissions for cities of the first and second class. These commissions are to be appointed by the mayor, the only restriction on his freedom of choice being that in the cities of New York and Buffalo (the next in size to New York in this State) he is required to ask for lists of nominees from certain philanthropic societies, from which lists he may, at his discretion, make his selection. These commissions are proposed to be under the supervision of the State Board of Charities, to which they must make regular reports, and which in turn will undertake to maintain a fairly equal standard

of work throughout the State. If the mayor should neglect to appoint members of the commission or to fill vacancies within a certain time, the State Board of Charities is to perform this duty. The powers of the municipal commissions as suggested are as follows:—

1. To appoint probation officers and other necessary employees of such commission, and to remove them.

2. To supervise, direct, control, and designate the duties of probation officers.

3. To collect and preserve statistical information in regard to probation in their respective localities; to make and keep records of probation cases, index and classify the same, and in general to increase and extend the efficiency of probation service.

4. To hold meetings, at least once a month, and to render reports of these meetings, and of the progress of work, to the State Board of Charities.

It is hoped that through these unpaid boards the public will gradually gain a knowledge of the possibilities and limitations of probation. The recommendations have been framed into a Bill which is still before the Legislature, and therefore the plan has had no trial to test its value. The scheme certainly promises excellent results. As the choice of probation officers would be from civil service lists, the boards would have no political patronage to confer, and consequently the only inducement to aspire to membership on such a board would be public spirit and the honour that comes from serving the public. There is, therefore, good reason to suppose that mayors would make wise appointments to the commissions. In spite of exceptions, the treatment of criminals is on the whole the most backward department of our government. There is the minimum of reflection or of an understanding of human nature shown in much of the penalogical practice. Improvement lies in a public opinion informed as to the

efficacy of different methods of dealing with offenders against the law. In addition to enlightening public opinion, the probation commissions would, through their power to direct the work of probation officers, relieve the busy magistrates of a duty that is more than should be asked of them in a large city.

In going over many reports of probation work for children, it has struck me that this excellent work, with the tender and individual interest in the welfare of each child in which lies its especial force, may suffer from a lack of breadth of view on the part of some of its promoters. Even though it works well for the delinquent boys to be sent to camp for the summer, or to be provided by the probation officer with employment nicely adapted to special tastes, the good children, whose parents bring them up carefully, and who do not get arrested, should be taken into consideration. In one report I find that the probation officers established connections with the leading manufacturers and employers of the city, by which means they placed probationers at work so advantageously that many boys, or their parents, who had never been arrested came to the juvenile court employment bureau to apply for work. The court had apparently entirely lost its stigma of shame. In another report I find the statement that "we can fairly say that boys from the juvenile court seeking work really have their opportunities improved by the very fact that they have been to this court." It is certainly important that boys should have work and be kept at it when on probation, but what is the effect on good children and careful parents likely to be if they find that petty larceny or throwing stones leads to a summer outing, or, better still, to a more promising position than could have been obtained by the offender without influence? Justice must embrace the good as well as the bad. If naughty boys should have these advantages, so should the good ones, but they should be given entirely apart from a juvenile court.

These excesses of kindly interest will undoubtedly be modified in time. They only indicate a somewhat unbalanced enthusiasm for a new, and so far a very successful, experiment. In the meantime, however, violent reaction from any such extreme is always to be feared.

Not unnaturally, objections have been raised to the departure from old custom and law involved in a juvenile court and probation by different members of the judiciary, whose point of view, conservative by training and profession, is confirmed by the distrust of any relaxation of brute force which a large knowledge of crime joined to a necessarily superficial acquaintance with criminals is likely to engender. These gentlemen frequently take an extremely discouraging view of the possibilities of reform in criminals. Their opinion will in the course of time be qualified, if it continues to be shown, as those who have an intimate knowledge of criminals believe it will be, that a certain proportion, and among juveniles a large proportion, of law-breakers can be dealt with successfully without imprisonment. Equally natural, perhaps, but infinitely less deserving of respect, is the conservatism of judges who, like several in two of the States, oppose the establishment of juvenile courts because they consider that it would detract from their dignity to serve in a court devoted to children.

In accounts of the work of juvenile courts again and again appears the statement that in the probation officer lies the vitality and efficiency of the court. There is no question whatever as to the importance of this office, but the intelligent conscientiousness of the judge himself needs equal emphasis. The probation officer must be honest, a good investigator, and a person of judgment, sympathy and firmness, but with all these qualifications his work may be hampered or even nullified by a judge who has not grasped the opportunities presented by probation, or who is, perhaps, only partially in sympathy with it. For

instance, I have in mind an occasion when the court allowed a prisoner the privilege of probation on condition that he leave the city and return to his family in another State. The probation officer, on the probationer's showing disinclination to go, after he had obtained his freedom, explained to him that, unless he kept his agreement, he must return to court and probably suffer imprisonment. The probationer answered that his lawyer had informed him that the court had no power to enforce such a condition, and on consulting the court the officer, to his chagrin, was told that this was true. The court certainly intended no harm, but the condition had been thoughtlessly imposed. Such careless action impairs the authority and prestige of the court, and of the probation officer as its agent. It is imperative that even when a prisoner has been allowed the modified freedom that probation affords, the court should never hesitate about carrying out its own conditions and commands, otherwise the system may become a farce, a round-about way of discharging prisoners.

Excesses and short-comings, however, are incident to any undertaking in which large numbers of persons participate, and indeed, like most of the instances mentioned, may be a matter of sincere difference in opinion or judgment. And since some of the same differences in opinion may be met in introducing probation abroad that have been met here, it will possibly facilitate the labour of pushing the movement there to know of points which Americans hope to see improved, as well as those which they regard with unqualified satisfaction.

SIR WILLIAM CHANCE read the following paper by M. Marcel Kleine (Probation Officer of Paris).

THE PROBATION SYSTEM FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS IN PARIS.

By MARCEL KLEINE.

(Paris: Editor of "*L'Enfant*," &c.)

ON the 6th February last, following the remarkable report made by M. Juilliet at the Musée Social, under the presidency of Senator Berenger, on the numerous advantages of the juvenile courts of America for the raising up of delinquent youth or the morally abandoned, M. Rollet, Director of Patronage of Children and Young People, resolved to adopt the system in France under the name of "Probation System for Young Offenders," thus utilising really the law of the 19th April, 1898.

The law in question permitted a Tribunal to pronounce on the future of a minor, to declare him to be of an age that is without discretion, to acquit him, and to send him back either to his parents or to the Assistance Publique, or to some suitable charitable institution.

By virtue of this law, and on the initiative of M. Rollet, the Tribunal of the Seine on the 10th February last referred the case of a youthful offender to the Patronage of Children and Young People, which, instead of placing him in the hands of a third party, sent him back to his mother, reserving the right to exercise supervision on the mother and on the child, and to take back the child in case of need. Thus the probation system was created in Paris.

Since this date, and according to the same procedure, the care of thirty-three children has been conferred on them, by divers judgments of the Tribunals, and the care of one girl was conferred to the Œuvre du Seigneur of Mme. Simon Teutsch. It operates for boys and girls, and it is obvious that

the number of children put under the probation system will soon be very considerable.

The supervision and inspection of these children is placed in three "probation officers," of whom one is a lady, the second contributed to by private initiative; the third delegate is furnished by the Prefecture of Police, who has set himself from the first hour to carry out the new idea. I have personally visited some families, and in the course of these visits I became convinced of the efficacy of this supervision, and saw that no severity was used, except in extreme cases.

Out of the thirty-three children who have been confided to the care of the patronage twenty-eight have conducted themselves well up to the present; we have received good reports of them, and there is reason to think that they have been cured of their bad behaviour, and that they will become good subjects to the State and excellent workmen. Two only have disappointed us, and have fled from the homes of their parents, to whom we had sent them, and a search has been made for them. Kindness not having succeeded, it will be necessary to take more severe measures.

One only of the thirty-three has fallen back into his bad habits. As far as one may judge from an experience, of which one must not be too vain, of a few months only, the probation system for young offenders gives good results in Paris, as it does in America.

By the side of this committee of action exists a second committee of study, under the presidentship of M. Juilliet, the minister of new ideas, which group contains several persons who study particularly the question of unfortunate, delinquent, or morally abandoned children. The committee has decided to keep account of the actual legislation, to follow up the results of the second part of the American idea, that is to say, the specialisation of the Tribunal for Children. It is a capital reform.

MR. EDWARD GRUBB (formerly Secretary of the Howard Association) said that the Howard Society had for many years been warmly interested in this question of probation officers. Two years ago he had had the privilege of seeing the operation of this system of treating juvenile offenders in Indianapolis, Boston and in some other American cities. He agreed with what had been said by Mr. Lord and Mr. Bruce Murray, that the system of probation officers was an absolutely necessary accompaniment of children's courts, if those courts were to be really successful. A great deal depended upon the adoption of right methods of organising the work of probation officers, and on selecting the right men and women for this important and responsible work. He could not believe that the system adopted at Glasgow of having policemen as probation officers would prove eventually to be successful. A different class of person was needed for this work, and he hoped that Glasgow, praiseworthy as the city was for what had already been accomplished and the energy thrown into the work, would adopt, when the necessary legislation had been secured, a method more similar to that in vogue at Indianapolis. From all he had been able to learn, he believed that that experience was the most hopeful and the most worthy of imitation of any plan that had yet been devised, and he hoped that it would not be long before we obtained in this country such legislation that the courts would be empowered to appoint one or two paid probation officers for each court, and that under those officers would be working, with the delegated authority of the court, paid volunteers who would be responsible for the work of supervision of delinquent children.

MR. T. R. ACKROYD (Hon. Sec., Manchester and Salford Boys' and Girls' Refuges and Homes) stated that in Manchester great success had attended the establishment of children's courts. During the fifteen months they had been at work nearly 700 children had appeared before the special magistrates. A great point was to deal with the children quickly, and so it had been arranged that the courts should sit every morning. There was a *rota* of magistrates, who dealt with the children, not in the court, but in a special room, where the little ones were brought to a table and the children were dealt with in a fatherly manner. It had been arranged with the institution he represented that the children should never be taken to the court at all, but when arrested by the police that they should be brought at once to the shelter, where they were taken charge of till the following morning, when the police came for them. If the children were remanded the institution again took charge of them for a week, or even for a fortnight. He hoped, however, that it would not go forth that that Conference was anxious to see the criminal law placed on the same lines as the civil law with respect to minors. That would injure their cause greatly, and prejudice would be created

if it were thought they advocated that juvenile offenders should not be made responsible for wrong-doing. If they directed their energies to saving children under sixteen years of age, they would stand more chance of securing public sympathy. Manchester had not yet adopted the system of probation officers; they hoped to do something on those lines, but at present some of them thought that what was better than a probation officer was, seeing children brought into court needed special supervision, to get some well-known lady, city missionary, or some worker among the poor, to take a special interest in a particular child. That plan had been found effective. It would, he thought, be a mistake to use policemen. If the work was to be successful, it must be apart from the police element, and someone not identified with the law must take the children in hand. Happily in Manchester they had the fullest sympathy of the Chief Magistrate and the Chief Constable, Mr. Robert Peacock—(Hear, hear)—and he was glad to be able to inform the Conference that their work had been most successful. (Cheers.)

ALDERMAN S. COHEN (Hull) said he was pleased to say that in the city in which he lived they had adopted a remand home for the use of boys and girls. As a prison visitor for several years, he had noticed how children there lost all self-respect, and went about the exercise yard with every assurance. He was thoroughly opposed to sending children to prison. He disagreed with his friend that morning who mentioned the age of minors. He thought it would be a very serious thing for this country if that age was adopted, considering the large number of criminals and people who transgressed the law from the age of sixteen to twenty. He was strongly in favour of sending the boys on board their training ships. In the industrial schools the girls had an opportunity of learning how to sew and work, and perhaps take an active part in the domestic life of those institutions. Some of the girls became very useful domestic servants. He was certainly strongly in favour of courts being established for children, so that they should not come in contact with criminals. (Hear, hear.)

MR. CARDROSS GRANT said he thought it was a wise thing on the part of the Glasgow Corporation and authorities to make use of policemen as far as they could, just as a temporary measure, to see how it worked, and then, if they were able to say to the ratepayers what an excellent system it was, no doubt the ratepayers would gladly accept the new proposals of special officials.

MISS BAKER (Holborn Board of Guardians and the Metropolitan Asylums Board) said children's courts were most desirable wherever they could be established. Some large towns had done so, and others could follow that example. In smaller towns it would take longer to establish them and magistrates

to attend them, because there were few cases there, and, where all are kept waiting under the eye of the magistrate, there is much less danger of evil associations. A necessary corollary of the children's courts was the probation officer. The work of probation was evidently most successful, when they heard that ninety-eight per cent. were not brought back to complete their sentences, and she thought Mrs. Sheffield would agree that it was an excellent thing to make the parent or guardian responsible for what the child had done. She did not like to take away the child's responsibility altogether, but at the same time they ought to feel the responsibility, and if the parents have encouraged the child in evil ways, upon them should fall the first blow. No doubt the child would feel some discomfort if the parent or guardian was punished. Mrs. Sheffield hit the mark when she said there was a tendency in kindly people to exaggerate the consideration meted out to those under their care and make it almost an advantage to be in one of those courts. They had to be careful in that matter, as they might lessen the responsibility of parents and create discouragement, which would be a pity. Punishment ought not to be inflicted in any spirit of revenge; it ought to prevent a recurrence of the crime, though the punishment ought to be sufficiently severe to deter the child committing the offence again. The task of inflicting punishment would thereby be lessened. Probation was the very best form for the punishment to take, because the punishment was not very heavy, the detention was not very long, and there was a great deal of increased natural responsibility. The boy felt his responsibility, and the parent made him feel it. The responsibility of parent and child was increased, and that was the very thing they ought to aim at. A great deal of crime and vice arose from weakness, rather than from actual vicious propensities. (Hear, hear.)

MISS POOLE (Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants) said that that society undertook the care of girls placed in service from large industrial schools. She wanted the Conference to consider whether the age at which girls and boys were sent to industrial schools was the age for children's courts. Did they think it should be raised to eighteen? The children could be placed out at any age after fourteen, and must be placed out by the time they reach the age of sixteen. They were licensed to trades, or, in the case of girls, to situations. By default, their licences may be revoked, and they may be called back to school, or any other home certified by the Home Office, for a period not exceeding three months. It would be a good thing to make the cost to the parent of keeping a child at an industrial school more than keeping a child at home. She approved of the ages of girls being raised from fourteen to sixteen, as it would prevent many a girl going to prison.

MR. COURTENAY LORD, J.P., proposed the following resolution :

“ That the Home Secretary be urged to give every facility for the passing of the Summary Jurisdiction (Children's) Bill, so that the same may be passed into law during the present session ;

“ That in any alterations which may be made in the laws relating to youthful offenders the following points may receive earnest consideration : 1. Youthful offender should mean any child under sixteen ; 2. As to convictions, no conviction for any offence should rank as a conviction against the child under sixteen, or be recorded ; 3. That in such case the word offender should not be used ; 4. Licensing-out should be made the fullest use of, so that children may be taught trades ; 5. Children under the Industrial Schools Acts should be liable to be sent there under sixteen, not fourteen, as at present ; 6. The governors of prisons should be required to report to the Secretary of the Home Department all cases of children under sixteen received in prison, instead of fourteen, as at present ;

“ And that a copy of this resolution, with the minutes, be sent to the Home Secretary.”

MR. COURTENAY LORD said he had 443 adjourned cases for such offences as gambling, throwing stones, street obstruction, and minor offences. There were 443 cases passed through the court in the twelve months, and most of the adjournments were made for three months. In every case they had reports that the particular offences for which the children had been brought up had not been repeated, and the children behaved in a proper manner. On being adjourned the children were taken charge of by representatives of their religious persuasion. As to why so few were sent to industrial schools and reformatories, they had never sent a boy or girl to those institutions if they thought that by strengthening the home influence and by visitation at home they could treat them better.

SIR WILLIAM CHANCE seconded the resolution. He did not want to commit himself to all the resolution, but each point should be brought one by one before that Conference. He thought they were all agreed that it was desirable to have remand homes, to have courts where cases could be heard separately from the cases of adult offenders, and that this should be followed up by a system of probation officers. After what they had heard from America, Glasgow, Birmingham, and the good results attending their efforts in this direction, now was the time when the question should be thoroughly taken up. He did not agree with Mr. Lloyd Baker that it would be so very difficult to establish these things in the petty sessional districts in the country. As the chairman of a county bench himself, he often felt when he had small children

before him what a pity it was that the cases could not be heard separately in another room. It would be possible to depute one or two magistrates to deal with these cases separately. The First Offenders Act was one of the most beneficial Acts passed by Parliament, and at his own court they made much use of it. He understood Mr. Murray to say that the Glasgow policemen employed as probation officers were men who had been pensioned. He (the speaker) did not see why such policemen might not be valuable probation officers, if they wore plain clothes. He did not think there was any ground for the prejudice against that class of men. He had seen a good deal of them, and his experience was that policemen were the kindest people in the world, as a rule, and where they got a man who had served well in the police and got a pension, it seemed to him he might be found useful as a probation officer. (Hear, hear.) He agreed with the proposal that the age at which children could be kept in the industrial schools should be raised. Discretion might be given through the magistrates that proper cases should be detained for longer than the usual age.

MR. E. H. HARVEY (Swindon and Highworth Board of Guardians) referred to cases of men who were left widowers with large families. If they could send the children to a home, and the man was willing to contribute, they would do more to keep the children out of the court than to leave the responsibility upon a man so circumstanced. While the arguments in favour of children's courts and probation officers were very good, they did not go deep enough in the direction of instituting a system to prevent the children even getting into the hands of probation officers or into the courts. A man might be shut up in a factory all day, and the children might be at the mercy of a dissolute wife. Probation officers, if established, should have power to deal with such cases as that. While he approved of the resolution, he did not think it went far enough.

MR. WILLIAM BROWN (Aston Union) supported the recommendations submitted. He welcomed the establishment of children's courts. Mr. Lord told them that 434 cases had been adjourned as the result of the establishment of children's courts in Birmingham, but he (the speaker) did not understand what was the moral result of the adjournment of those cases. While he appreciated the value of the work the justices were doing in this direction, he wished to draw attention to their change of opinion in regard to parental responsibility. Since the establishment of children's courts, the number committed by justices to industrial schools and reformatories had continually decreased. While appreciating the necessity for parental responsibility, it was a pity to remove children from the care of kindly-disposed gentlemen and ladies connected with various committees and place them in the care of parents who, in his opinion, viewing them from the Poor Law standpoint, would be regarded as vicious.

MR. T. HOLMES (Secretary of the Howard Association) said he had had twenty-one years' experience in London police courts, and the magistrates had dealt with police-court missionaries as probation officers, and with the best results. The idea of the probation officer was not new, but it was one worth developing, and he had letters from magistrates who declared themselves to be absolutely in favour of their appointment under the jurisdiction of the court, to be ruled by the court, and to have certain limited powers. They had found from the work of the missionaries that this was quite practicable and would be useful. He believed the appointment of probation officers would prevent a large number of boys and girls ever entering industrial schools and reformatories. They would bring an influence to bear upon the parents that would be wholesome all through the house. The officers should be paid and not voluntary agents, and both men and women should be appointed. He would put the men to look after the women and the women after the men, because each sex is more charitable to the other. The demand from industrial schools and reformatories now was for the best and not the worst boys and girls. They would not take them without a stiff medical examination; hence the weak ones were neglected by such institutions, and those boys, whom the magistrates had no power to send to the schools or homes, were sent back to their homes to gravitate into crime and become what 400 had become who were unfit for prison discipline. The influence of remand homes depended upon the management, and he could conceive it quite possible that where twenty or thirty criminally-inclined boys were got together there might be a worse influence than if the boys were committed for a time to the workhouse. They had to be careful in the management of remand homes that they did not become places where children might contaminate each other.

THE REV. W. H. H. FAIRCLOUGH (Burton-on-Trent Union) spoke as the Hon. Sec. of the Police Court Missionary Society of South Staffordshire. Last year over 100 cases of young children were committed to the charge of the missionaries. Those missionaries throughout England provided material for probation officers. He did not think an ex-policeman was the proper person to be a probation officer, because he did not think a policeman was a persuasive person. They wanted men well chosen, who must be able to talk to the parents and point out their responsibility, and show them that if the children are not cared for they must become members of the criminal class. He agreed with many speakers on the question of remand homes. The workhouse was not the place to send children. It was easy to have remand homes in a town, but in a scattered district in the country there were difficulties, and he thought they would have to have a boarding-out system. In the country districts there were not so many children remanded as in the towns. He was thoroughly in favour

of children's courts. He hoped the result of the resolution would be the establishment of remand homes, children's courts, and probation officers. (Hear, hear.)

The resolution was carried, and ordered to be sent to the Prime Minister, as well as the Home Secretary.

DR. SAVEGE (Hull) then moved :

"That in the opinion of this Conference a workhouse is not a fit place, and the workhouse master is not a fit person to whose custody the juvenile offender should be remanded, and we respectfully call upon all municipal authorities to provide adequate accommodation for the custody of such cases."

During the past year it was reported to his board of guardians that one child of nine years, one child of ten years, four of eleven years, three of twelve, and nine of thirteen were remanded to the custody of the workhouse. His own, and the opinion of his board, was that the workhouse was not the proper place to which to remand children. He was thoroughly in sympathy with all that had been said with reference to children's courts, remand homes and juvenile offenders.

MR. WILSON seconded the resolution. He disapproved of children being remanded to a workhouse, and thought the punishment meted out to a child should not merely punish but prevent the child going further wrong. His board had passed resolutions asking the magistrate not to send children on remand on to them. He felt sure an order from the Home Office would prevent the evil.

Several speakers objected to the workhouse master being mentioned in the resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN stated that Dr. Savege was willing to use the words "workhouse officials" in place of "workhouse master."

MR. GREEN complained that those Conferences dealt more with results than with causes. They took away the responsibility of the parents, who wanted it taken away. But they should teach parents their responsibility.

On the suggestion of MR. SHELLEY, of Huddersfield, Dr. Savege agreed to leave out of the resolution all reference to "workhouse officials," as nothing was furthest from his mind than to cast any reflection upon workhouse officials.

The resolution was further amended by substituting "local authority" for "municipal authority," and in this form the resolution was carried.

This concluded the discussion of the treatment of youthful offenders.

SECOND DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

SIR WILLIAM BOUSFIELD again took the chair.

CHILDREN'S RELIEF COMMITTEES IN
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

BY SIR CHARLES ELLIOTT, K.C.S.I.

(Chairman of the Joint Committee for Underfed Children in London.)

So much has been written of late years on the subject of under-fed school children, that it is difficult to select any points which are of sufficient interest or novelty to be worthy of being laid before such an audience of experts as this is.

There has, however, been one important element introduced for the first time during the last year by the intervention of boards of guardians to assist in the investigation into distress, and it is to the results of that intervention, and the conclusions which flow from it, that I wish to draw your attention.

In order to know how to deal with the relief of necessitous children, we ought first to arrive at something like a clear conviction as to what is meant by "necessitous," and as to the extent to which under-feeding prevails. Very divergent views exist on this subject. . . . The position which I maintain is that we have to deal with insufficient feeding, not with starvation, and the real question before us is to ascertain—what is the extent of the insufficiency—how far it really exists—and what are the best means of supplying the deficiency.

The difficulty of obtaining correct answers to these questions is very great, and as a rule is only gradually realised by those who engage in the enquiry. . . . Reports of unprofessional observers, mostly untrained to such investigations, start with very different standards as to what constitutes privation, or

sufficiency and comfort, in a working man's family. Many, especially ladies, are restrained by delicacy from too minute cross-examination ; many begin with *à priori* views as to what is a sufficient income for a family ; few recognise till taught by long experience how extremely difficult it is to discover what the real income is. They are more familiar with the better than with the worst classes of the poor, and are largely influenced by benevolent sympathy. They feel no public responsibility as to expenditure, and would rather err on the charitable side than on the side of severity. There exists, however, a body of professional observers, the relieving officers of the Poor-law guardians, whose qualities are in several respects the converse of the foregoing. They deal mostly with the worst cases among the poor ; their standard of comfort and sufficiency is low ; they are responsible to the public, as they will be called to account if through them an undue number of cases are thrown on the poor rates ; they are skilled in meeting evasion and falsehood, and they are not over scrupulous or delicate in pushing their cross-examinations home. It is therefore natural that a smaller number of children would pass muster as under-fed in their estimation than in that of the relief committee. On the other hand, not only have they the defects of their qualities, but they start from an unfavourable position in their enquiries, because the public of the lower classes, while accepting almost greedily private charity from district visitors and agents of benevolent associations accustomed to purvey relief, resents the taint of pauperism conveyed by the receipt of public charity on enquiries made through the Poor-law officials. We should therefore expect that a list of under-fed children, drawn up by a school relief committee, with the help of all means of enquiry available to them, would be subject to severe recension at the hands of the guardians after investigation by their relieving officers.

Such a recension we have had for the first time this year at the hands of some of the Poor-law guardians, and it is interesting to note the results derived from it. The movement started from the visit of certain gentlemen to the Johanna Street School, after which they waited on the Lambeth Board of Guardians to represent the serious condition of things they found there. The relieving officer was sent to investigate about sixty of the cases, and in almost every instance he found that there had been great exaggeration. In some houses, the children from which asserted they had had no breakfast, he found plenty of food on the table. Many of the parents professed complete ignorance that their children were on the necessitous list and were being fed at school, and denied that there was any cause for such complaint. There was hardly a single instance in which the officer felt bound to grant any relief.

The Fulham and Wandsworth Boards subsequently offered their assistance to the London County Council in investigating cases of children classed as necessitous, and lists of such children were sent them from several schools. The Fulham Guardians dealt with eighty-nine cases from seven schools, and their relieving officers reported that seventy-five of these were not under-fed. In most of them the fathers, who were believed to be out of work, were found to be in regular work. In many instances the children admitted to the relieving officer that they had told their teacher a lie, and were not in want of food at home. Often the parents indignantly denied that there was any shortage of food. Some children were reported to be delicate, and in want of hospital treatment, but not of food. One family was found to have an income of from £4 to £5 a week. In one case, that of a father crippled by an accident, much sympathy was felt by managers and teachers for the family, and as one of the head teachers said, "they

got everything that was going," but the relieving officer discovered, what the school authorities could hardly be expected to know, that the father had received £150 as compensation for his accident, and the family were living on that in comfort. The Wandsworth Guardians enquired into eighty-eight cases from nine schools, and their relieving officer reported sixty not to be underfed; some of the rest not being found at the address given. The medical officer examined a good many of these children, and found no case of mal-nutrition. Most of the fathers were found to be earning wages, the officer saw a supply of food in many of the houses, several of the mothers declared that their children had a hot meal cooked every day, and many of the children admitted that they suffered from no want of food at home. From a report prepared by the relief committee of two Wandsworth schools, I extract the following comparison between the diagnosis of the unprofessional visitor, and the relieving officer in some cases.

These reports leave a great deal of doubt in the mind, as to the extent to which distress and insufficient feeding really exist, but they dispel the suspicion that there is anything which can properly be called starvation, except possibly in individual cases. The relieving officers are too experienced to overlook anything of this kind, but it is open to us to suspect that they are prone to take a hard and official view of the circumstances. The children who contradicted to the relieving officer what they had said to the teacher, undoubtedly told a lie; but it was questionable which of the two statements was the lie. The parents who might trade on the sympathy of the school authorities by exaggerating their wants, might err from the truth as much on the other side, when asserting their well-being to the relieving officer. To sum up the figures above quoted, out of 177 cases, 143 were not held to be genuine, and most of the residue were unproved,

and if we were to take these figures as a guide, at least three-quarters of the children believed by the school authorities to be necessitous, are not so. My own conclusion, however, is that we should not be justified in going further than this, that in the great majority of cases, the distress is not so severe as to satisfy the standard of men who are accustomed to see want and poverty in their extreme stages. But that there is a great deal of temporary pinching, and of insufficiency of food, especially in the winter, when employment is slack, cannot, I think, be doubted.

I have dealt rather fully with this preliminary point, because it is essential to lay down a sound foundation for our procedure, and to know what is the nature of the distress which we have to relieve. If it were bitter, extreme, permanent and widespread, so as to affect the growth and physical well-being of a large portion of the children in our schools, then possibly it might be necessary for the State to intervene with some general measure for dealing with it. But if it is sporadic, intermittent, and not severe, if the symptoms point only to such temporary insufficiency of the supply of food as can receive material relief from the provision of a few meals in the week, then I maintain, it is not more than can be dealt with by voluntary agencies and charitable funds, as has been done in previous years, though there is room for more complete organisation of those agencies, and more careful enquiry into the cases relieved.

The actual number of children fed on an average throughout the winter season of about thirteen weeks in the Provided schools of London during the last six years has been:—1900-1, 18,857: year of the Boer war; employment abundant. 1901-2, 20,085. 1902-3, 23,206: return of soldiers from the war; many thrown out of employ. 1903-4, 23,842. 1904-5, 26,951: distress more severe than in previous years. 1905-6, 27,159: distress slighter, enquiry more active. If we assume that the same proportionate

number would be found to be under-fed in the Non-provided schools, this would raise the total figure for the whole of London, with its 750,000 children on the roll, to 37,000 requiring their food to be supplemented.

Can we assume that this figure is the measure of the number of necessitous children for whom in ordinary years provision of meals to supplement insufficient feeding ought to be made? I think that we may safely make this assumption. On the one hand, while no one would assert that every case of necessity has been discovered and dealt with, still there has been of late a great increase of activity in the search for such cases. During the last season about fifty new schools have been brought on the list, in which children have been fed for the first time; in most of them only a few cases of distress were discovered, and the aggregate total number fed has not materially increased. On the other hand, we are convinced by the tenor of reports of the relieving officers and of the managers who have taken enquiry strictly in hand, that a considerable proportion of those who were fed were not in want at all, or not in serious want, and that strict investigation would greatly reduce the number of those classed as necessitous. Putting such a reduction against a possible increase in the number, if all deserving cases are discovered, it seems safe to say, that if the responsibility of providing a meal for all necessitous children is thrown by law upon the Education Authority, the number to be dealt with will not exceed 40,000, and may probably fall even below 30,000. I am speaking here of the average number in want throughout the season, not of individual children. Many children on the list in October will be taken off in a month or two when the fathers get work, and many whose fathers fall out of work in December or January will be put on. According to the figures we obtained last year, 30,000 children in want of meals throughout the thirteen weeks

represent about 45,000 individual children who are in want for shorter periods during the winter. The problem before us is a grave one, but it is not so grave as might be expected from much excited and exaggerated language that is used on the subject.

The cost of the meals supplied by the various voluntary associations varies from three-farthings for soup and bread only, to twopence-halfpenny or three-pence when hot meat is given, and I think it may be accepted that a good satisfying meal can be provided for an average cost of three-halfpence for food only, excluding charges for fuel, utensils and service. At four meals a week for thirteen weeks (I exclude Monday, as it is generally agreed that even among the poorest classes the Sunday dinner leaves enough food in stock for Monday) each child will cost 6s. 6d., or say one-third of a pound. So the feeding of 30,000 children on this scale requires an expenditure of £10,000. No one will venture to assert that this is a sum which the charity of the benevolent public in London cannot be relied on to supply. On the contrary, we may be quite sure that if the need were sorer, and the facts were properly placed before the public, double or treble that amount could easily be collected. Even now, with very little labour and solicitation, about £17,000 is raised annually for the Country Holiday Fund, and if people will contribute so much to send poor children for a fortnight into the country, we may be sure that they will do as much and more to save them from hunger.

These considerations seem to me to put the proposal to place the cost of feeding on the rates absolutely out of court. Everyone knows that the effect of such an arrangement would be to increase enormously the number of applications. Food would be claimed as a right, not as a privilege. Every parent would urge that he, as a ratepayer, is entitled to benefit by expenditure out of the rates. The self-respect which prevents many parents now from asking

for charity would be destroyed; distribution of meals would become a platform cry, and it would go hard at election times with those who insisted on strict enquiry into the circumstances and income of applicants. It seems the merest common sense to hold that unless and until it is proved that voluntary charity will not meet the case, there should be no recourse to public funds. . . .

I claim, then, to have established these three positions, that the necessitous children in London do not exceed a manageable number, say between 30,000 and 40,000; that the money required to provide them with meals can certainly be obtained from voluntary sources, and that it is as unnecessary as it would be dangerous to draw that money, or any money for this purpose, from the rates. If this is so, the only question that remains is, Through what agency shall the relief be administered? Shall it be through the voluntary agencies now existing, and employed in the work, or through a new and paid agency created by the education authority?

Here I think the doctrine of *beati possidentes* applies. The voluntary associations are in possession, they have provided the machinery, the equipment of cooking utensils, crockery, or so forth, and in many cases the halls in which the meals are served. The authority, if it undertook to do this, would incur a large initial expenditure, and would saddle itself with a heavy responsibility. The Paris reports show how much time and thought the Municipal Council has had to devote to the multifarious details which the working of the *cantines* involves: questions of catering, cost of food, cost of fuel, quality of the meals, comparative cost of working, and so on. With what object should the authority undertake this burden? The only reason which I have heard suggested is, that the meals are often given in a scrambling, untidy way, in very crowded rooms, and that it would be a useful branch of the children's education to teach

them to sit at a neatly-laid table, with a clean cloth and flowers on it, and to eat their food in a decent and orderly fashion. I cannot believe that anyone who appreciates what a burden the responsibility for all the obligatory branches of education has thrown on the London County Council, would wish to add to it, for the sake of such questionable advantages as these.

I hold, then, that we cannot do better than continue our existing system, and that in this way, more than in any other, it is possible to deal efficiently with the problem of relieving the wants of children who are insufficiently fed. The system is, however, capable of much improvement in the way of consolidation and organisation, and such improvement will necessarily be effected if the Provision of Meals Bill is passed into law, the clause permitting the feeding of non-necessitous children being struck out. It will then be the duty of the London County Council to take the matter in hand, which I trust they will do by utilising the present voluntary agencies, and placing the supervision of the work in the hands of a committee with sufficient establishment to see that its instructions are carried out in such a way that provision shall be made for every child who is found to be suffering from an insufficient supply of food.

By Miss MARGARET FRERE.

(Manager of the Tower Street L.C.C. School, Seven Dials.)

I AM going to outline as briefly as possible a scheme for dealing with under-fed and necessitous children.

The scheme is that of children's relief committees, devised by the London School Board and adopted by the London County Council. These relief committees are set up in many of the elementary schools of London, where they are doing good work, so no doubt they will be established in time in schools all over the country. Therefore it is interesting and important to know—

(a) How a children's relief committee should be formed ; (b) how it should work ; (c) what advantages it confers on children. In order to illustrate the practical working of the scheme, I will take the feeding question and show how it should be dealt with under that system.

Before considering these three points in detail, it is necessary to show that a scheme of any kind is required, for in this age of pressure and overwork no superfluous machinery must be set going in our schools.

Let us examine for a moment the physical condition of our elementary school population, as it is revealed to us in the many reports which have lately been published on this subject. We find that things are not quite so bad as some of us had begun to fear might be the case ; a large number of school children are strong and well and happy, but on the other hand the reports show that a certain number of these children are in a very sad plight ; some incapacitated by physical defects, which might be remedied if taken in time ; others coming daily to school hungry, dirty, tired, suffering in silence at the hands of cruel or ignorant parents.

To teach these little human wrecks is an impossible task, as the teachers have always said, and now that the attention of the nation has been called to the sufferings of these children, many thoughtful people are anxiously considering how best to remedy this wasteful, deplorable state of things among a section of our child population, which is indeed an ugly blot upon our national life. In order to wipe it out we must *do* something, therefore we need a plan of action, a *scheme*.

Now, the only suggestion which has yet been made for solving the problem these poor children undoubtedly present is to feed all school children on every school-day at the expense of the community. This solution of the problem does not find favour in any foreign country, or in the United States of America, for free

meals alone do not enable necessitous children to profit from free education.

These children require more to be done for them than feeding them on school days, and whatever is done for them must be placed on a more *scientific* basis than wholesale free-feeding can ever supply if they are to be helped efficiently.

The chief causes of child misery may be summarised as follows: parental neglect, unwholesome surroundings, over work out of school hours, and temporary distress, caused by the illness of the parents or by want of work.

Consideration of these facts leads to the following conclusions:—

1. That the source of child-misery is in the children's homes.

2. That in the homes it must be grappled with.

These truths are not new, but "saving truths are mostly commonplace."

What do these children need before all else? They need *friendly visitors* in close touch with the homes as well as the schools, prepared to bring personal influence to bear on incompetent, lazy mothers, and indifferent, selfish fathers, and willing to give time, trouble and brain-power to individual children in distress. Acts of Parliament, bye-laws, health leaflets, all play their part in improving the condition of the people, but they must be set in motion and well backed up by personal endeavour if they are to produce much effect.

Home visiting is the pivot on which the system of children's relief committees turns, and it must greatly depend for its success on the personality of the friendly visitor. These visitors should be ladies, trained if possible in hygiene and acquainted with the lives of the poor. Relieving officers and attendance officers are not the right people to do this kind of domestic visiting, which indeed is not work for men at all. In order to secure a due supply of fit persons

to serve the State in the capacity of managers, the number of women should be increased. There is in the London Education Act of 1903 a little clause which should be inserted in the next Education Act. I mean the clause which enacts that on every group of local managers one-third of the number must be women. No such provision was put into the Education Act of 1902, which applies to the rest of the country, consequently in numbers of country and provincial schools no women managers exist.

A children's relief committee should consist of the three head teachers, two or more lady managers, two or more co-opted members, who should be local workers of different kinds: the visitor for the Children's Country Holiday Fund, for instance, a representative of the parish and of the board of guardians, in order that the committee may act as a link between the children and all the agencies which exist for helping them. The committee should meet at stated times at the school throughout the school year, and work on business lines, keeping minutes, printing annual reports and financial statements, and entering particulars of children assisted on simple case-papers, which are useful as records as well as for reference. All money subscribed for the benefit of the children should be given to the relief committee and expended by them. Everything affecting the welfare of children should come before the committee: feeding, health, boot clubs, banks, recreation, employment on leaving school, etc.

The work should be divided as follows:—The three head teachers to draw up, at certain periods, lists of names and addresses of all children to be visited for any reason whatever. The lady managers and other committee members to work through these lists, visiting the homes and doing all the planning and detailed work which the cases may demand, always reporting what they are about to the relief committee, with whom the ultimate decisions rest.

We must remember no right of way exists into the children's homes. The mothers must be approached in a conciliatory manner by the visitor, who goes as a friend of the children, taking with her an open mind and prepared to act in each case as circumstances dictate. The teachers' lists may require revising in the fresh light shed on them in the homes, for teachers naturally are sometimes mistaken over cases of apparent distress, as they are nearly always obliged to judge by a child's looks or by what a child tells them; we all know appearances are apt to be deceptive, and what a child says must be accepted with reserve. Children often have the appearance of being under-fed, when really they are suffering from unsuitable feeding, bad air, and want of sleep. In the majority of cases nothing but a visit to the mothers will reveal the true state of the family circumstances, and only then can steps be taken to remedy what is wrong.

I will now take the feeding question and show how it should be dealt with by a children's relief committee.

At the end of September the three head teachers, in consultation with the assistant teachers, would survey the whole school, with the object of finding out the children who will have, in all probability, to be fed later. Names and addresses will be entered on three lists, and these lists will be handed over at the first meeting, early in October, of the relief committee, to the lady managers, to be dealt with during the next fortnight. Cases of urgent distress should always receive emergency relief from the teachers, who should at once report the case to the lady manager, pending the next meeting of the relief committee. If mothers when visited are able to give a satisfactory account of their households, no offers of help should be made, but notes should be taken on the case, for report to the relief committee. It is surprising to find how many parents are willing and

able to feed and clothe their own children if no one else obligingly offers to relieve them of their parental duties. If anything is going in the way of charity, poor parents like to be present at the distribution, and as they have always possessed a wireless telegraphy of their own of a most perfect kind, they appear in shoals to demand tickets for their children on the plea that as Mrs. A.'s children have had them, why not theirs? Such parents should always be referred to the relief committee for their answer. Cases which require feeding should be placed provisionally on the dinner lists, which will be discussed and settled at the relief committee, the lists being revised periodically through the school year, for distress does not end automatically at Easter as feeding associations ingenuously assume to be one of Nature's laws, though distress is of course more acute and widespread in the winter than in the summer. Children on the dinner lists should be fed four or five days a week for as many consecutive weeks as the relief committee deem necessary. I think it might be a good plan to feed for a fortnight and only continue if the parents apply in person for an extension. All the school children of a family in distress should be fed. Sometimes breakfasts, sometimes dinners are useful. Sometimes warm milk is best of all. In all these matters of detail a wide discretionary power should be allowed to each relief committee. Different children have different needs and tastes, and what suits one does not suit another. While children are receiving free meals at school, steps should be taken by the friendly visitor in the homes to help the parents to right themselves or to right what is wrong with the children. If not, the children are likely to remain for ever on the dinner list. A children's relief committee should act as a clearing-house for distress. Distress can be detected at once in a school, but it does not follow it should be dealt with there. In fact it is a great mistake to turn schools into relieving offices and

teachers into almoners. Cases of distress should be promptly passed on to the agencies best suited to deal with them by the friendly visitor, who must make a point of studying the district in which the school stands, and getting to know all the activities at work within it, so as to be able to use them for the benefit of the children.

A children's relief committee should be always in existence, the members being summoned to meet at any time of the year by a post-card from the Head-Master, who is as a rule hon. secretary. Distress may spring up in a moment in a school, and it is most important that the machinery for dealing with it shall be always in readiness. Teachers and managers as they join the committee soon pick up the threads of the work and learn to take their part in it. The system is an elastic one, a strong point in its favour, seeing how widely the conditions of elementary schools vary. In numbers of these schools, for instance, no feeding or relief work would be needed, but such important matters as health, thrift, employment on leaving school, would fully occupy the energies of the children's committee. In some districts it might be found convenient to have one children's relief committee for a group of three schools; on the other hand, in the case of large poor schools, it would probably be advisable to set up separate relief committees in each.

I will sum up the chief points I should like to see carried out by law.

1. All poor elementary schools within each educational area to be scheduled.
2. Children's relief committees to be permanently established in all elementary schools.
3. All children's relief committees within an educational area to be affiliated to a local central association for financial purposes controlled by the education authority; the money subscribed for feeding and other purposes being received by the local central

association and disbursed in grants to the relief committees. Power to deal with criminal parents to be placed in the hands of the local education authority only.

The end of the whole matter is this: on the fitness of the children, mental, moral, physical, the fitness of the nation depends. The children depend on us, the men and women of to-day. Let us see to it that they get the guardianship they need.

THE CANTINES SCOLAIRES OF PARIS.

By M. MARCEL KLEINE.

SIR WM. CHANCE read a paper by M. Marcel Kleine on "The Cantines Scolaires of Paris."

I understand that you do not expect from me a discussion of principles, but simply an exact and concise statement of the working and administration of our "cantines scolaires" in Paris. I have purposely set aside all questions that the very principle of the free cantines raise. These are formidable questions into which I shall not enter, and the solution of which besides depends upon the economic conditions of each nationality.

The law of the 28th of March, 1882, the worthy crowning of a series of struggles, gropings, checks and successive results, which decreed that primary instruction in France should be obligatory and free, was the official consecration, long expected, of the principle of the freedom of national education, a principle admitted in the far-off time of the French Revolution. By this law children between the ages of six and thirteen are compelled to go to school, failing which their parents are subjected to a fine. Here is, according to a recent census, the exact number of children attending the 567 lay primary schools in

Paris. In February last, there were, in round numbers, 200,523 scholars attending our different schools, distributed thus : 80,269 boys, 74,444 girls and 45,810 infants. This figure, of course, does not represent the total number of the Parisian school children; for it would be necessary to add to this number the large body of children attending the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish private schools. Of that number about 173,784 children attend school regularly.

Observe now the exact distribution from the point of view of the frequenting of the cantines existing in each of our Parisian schools. The statistics I am giving you are quite recent and especially drawn up at the request of the municipal council, and very kindly communicated to me by the management of primary education.

On Friday, the 16th of March last, there were 38,334 children who took their meals in the cantines, viz.:—13,361 boys, 12,161 girls, and 7,809 infants. In order to be absolutely exact, I must add that on that day 7,366 were at school who did not visit the canteen. This list of children who bring their food with them is sufficiently interesting. Now if one compares the figures given above, one comes to the conclusion that the proportion of children attending the cantines scolaires is at present 52 per cent. Going into details, the proportion for the boys is 58·18 per cent. ; 61·26 per cent. for the girls, and 62½ per cent. for the infants. These figures agree with reason. It is stated indeed that the proportion of children taking their meals in the cantines increases in going successively from the boys to the girls and to the infants. As to the boys, the parents are less concerned as to their returning home for dinner than as to the girls. There is less danger for them in the streets; they can run errands and, if necessary, help to prepare the meals. It is more difficult for the girls to return home, as the streets present many dangers

for them ; and as to the infants, the parents have no hesitation in leaving them at school. By studying the population of the cantines scolaires from the point of view of distribution by "arrondissement" (or borough), one notices that the frequenting is important, especially in the working districts. Each of the cantines scolaires numbers not less than 200 children.

In the 1st arrondissement on the contrary, a rich borough *par excellence*, the average number of children taking their meals in the canteen is from 40 to 50.

In the 8th (Madeleine and Champs Elysees) the canteen scolaires, properly speaking, do not exist, the municipality giving some kind of assistance. The canteen scolaire is indeed an eminently popular organism, and its beneficent work is best seen in the working districts, in which it renders incontestable services.

While the parents are occupied outside, in the workshops or the works, the child is fed, sheltered, and kept from all the dangers of the street—this is a social obligation. Among the children attending the canteen a great number are admitted free, the others by means of a small reward, varying according to the arrondissements and to the particular schools. The price, however, never descends lower than ten centimes (1*d.*), and never surpasses 25 centimes (2½*d.*), the average is 15 centimes (1½*d.*).

For orphans free treatment is a right. It is the same for the indigent families, whether they be on the books of the Poor Law guardians or not. How, then, is this free treatment to be obtained? The demands for free treatment are ordinarily addressed by the parents to the central administration of the Caisse des Écoles, which afterwards distributes them into each Mairie. A delegate of the Caisse des Écoles is specially charged to register them. He takes into consideration not only the profession but also the

circumstances which may have temporarily reduced the families to ask for the gratuity. This gratuity is, however, granted only for the school year, for in September of each year the list of "beneficiares" is made out afresh. The administration of the Parisian cantines scolaires necessitates, in round numbers, a yearly expense of 1,400,000 francs (£56,000) all expenses included. How are these funds recruited? 360,000 francs (£14,400) comes from the payment for the meals not free, 25,000 francs (£1000), constitutes the small contribution of the "Caisse des Écoles," the difference, viz., 1,000,000 francs (£40,000), is provided by the municipal council of Paris. It can therefore be said that the city of Paris by its liberality assures the working of the cantines scolaires. This contribution is evidently considerable, and is a heavy charge on the Parisian budget.

It is now time to explain to you the characteristics of the administrative *régime* of the Parisian cantines. It is a delicate point. It is not municipalisation. The municipal council and the administration in each arrondissement demand that the "Caisses des Écoles" take upon themselves the administration and management of the cantines, which is a *régime* of the most absolute decentralisation. To sum up—the *rôle* of the municipal council is reduced to giving generously the necessary funds. In other words, the city of Paris is the banker of the "cantines scolaires." It is true that in an emergency a loan is made.

It is necessary now to give you some details concerning the "Caisses des Écoles," of which I have just spoken. They have as an object the visiting of the primary schools. It was not sufficient, indeed, to decree with the law of 1882 the obligatory and free lay school for all; it was necessary also that necessitous families should be enabled to send their children there. It often happens that the child has neither clothes nor suitable boots to go to school in. In such

a case the "Caisse des Écoles" of the district would usefully intervene. It distributes to the poor children clothes, free medicines, and at times gives assistance to the families. The first Caisse des Écoles dates from 1849; Paris now has one for each arrondissement. They have especially developed since the law of 1882 on public instruction. Their field of action is considerable; help in kind, reward to the pupils, help to the mothers, organisation of school excursions, holiday colonies, medical inspection of the eyes and the teeth, taking care of children, school mutualities, and finally, as I have told you, the administration of the "cantines scolaires."

The receipts come from funds invested from the shares of the members, collections at marriages, and from *fêtes de bienfaisance*, etc."

Ordinarily the supervision of the meals is exercised benevolently by the masters, who accept by rotation this additional task. As to the material organisation, a canteen does not necessitate much expense, in reality it only comprises the installation of a furnace, and the location of the refectory is easily managed in the school building, the yard often sufficing. The movable stock includes the tables, two enamelled saucepans, one for the soup, the other for the vegetables, one *cocotte en fonte* for the stews, tinned plates at sevenpence each, and threepence-halfpenny for the quite small spoons and forks. Sometimes the installation of a single furnace suffices for a group of schools (girls and boys) which are near each other.

It is difficult to fight against the instinct which is inscribed on the front of all our public edifices, namely, "the sentiment of equality." One infers from this fact that many families relieve themselves too easily from their obligations. Nothing but a minute and discreet investigation can enlighten us properly on the subject, though perhaps a remedy for certain abuses which have resulted may be found by specifying

that cheap meals can only be supplied to those whose names are entered at the *bureau de bienfaisance*. Perhaps there is in that a psychological subtlety which may prove sufficient to awaken the sleeping pride of families who rely too much on others for the care of their offspring.

How can the brain be filled when the stomach is starved? Spencer said truly of the same order of ideas, "The plant is neglected, in order to cultivate the blossom." The school canteens are an answer to the reproaches of the great thinker.

SIR ARTHUR CLAY said that he desired to speak upon the general effect of the practice of feeding school children, and more especially with regard to the Bill at present before Parliament. The evidence given before the Select Committee was concluded, and the report would soon be issued. According to the Bill, the local education authority was to take such steps as they might think fit to provide for children who were considered to be wanting food, and not able to avail themselves of the instruction provided, and the Bill continued, "And, if the local education authority think fit, any other children in their school." That practically meant taking power to feed all school children. He regretted the absence of Dr. Macnamara, because it would have been a great advantage to hear the reply of an opponent who would state the case on the other side, as Dr. Macnamara would have done. Why was the Bill demanded? It was asked for because it was said that a very large number of children are sent to school so underfed as to be unable to profit by the instruction offered to them. It was also said that since education has been provided free, they were bound to provide meals free. That always seemed to him to be the most singular argument possible. At the present moment the British artisan was in a far better position than he had ever been in throughout the history of this country, and was far better able to maintain his children now than ever before. Dr. Kerr, medical officer of the London Education Committee, in his report for 1905, said that children suffered from a variety of causes, of which underfeeding is perhaps one of the most trivial, and that his statement would be supported by all who had any real acquaintance with the homes of the poor. They know perfectly well that underfeeding in the sense of absolute want of food is rare; what the children suffer from, and unhappily many of them do suffer, is the insanitary condition of the dwelling, over-crowding of the rooms, late hours, want of medical or convalescent treatment, and overwork out of school hours. All

those causes are far more potent in bringing about the distress of school children than actual want of food ; not hunger but malnutrition was what children suffer from so much, and that malnutrition affects children not only in the elementary schools but in all classes of society. How was the Bill, if it became law, to remedy those causes of distress ? The giving of meals in schools would certainly not do it. What was really required was an improvement in home conditions and the better instruction of mothers in the purchase and preparation of food. He had followed the evidence given before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on this Bill. He ventured to say that no body of evidence on any subject was ever more strongly against a Bill in regard to which it was proffered than this evidence had been. Nothing could be clearer than the way witness after witness had shown the Bill was unnecessary, inadequate, and dangerous. Socialists supported the measure, not because they thought it was of any real use, but because they think, and quite openly admitted it, that it is an irrevocable step in the direction in which they want to go—State maintenance of children. You have supplied free education, now you are to supply free meals, but that would not be enough ; the next step would be free boots, free clothes, but then those things were not much good unless the houses were all right. In fact, once taken, the movement could not stop. Once the measure was passed, the country was committed to the whole policy, and in a few years there would be practical State maintenance of children. What did it mean ? It meant the breaking up of the family. He firmly believed that in human society—in any human society that was going to continue to exist—the family must be the basis on which society rests. If they broke up the family, they would break up society. The Bill was the first step, and a step that could not be retraced. What he hoped for was that, seeing the overwhelming character of the evidence brought before them, the Committee would have the courage to report in accordance with the weight of that evidence. Whether they would do so remained to be seen.

MR. HAROLD COX, M.P., said that he had observed that the charitable feeding of children in schools had led to a demand for the State feeding in schools, and that the demand for State feeding would lead to a demand for boots, shoes, and clothes. Indeed, in Paris it had already done so, and clothes were provided out of the money voted by the Municipal Council of Paris. If they asked any Socialist in this country, he would reply “ Oh, yes, we want clothing as well as food.” In other words, what the Labour party in this country wanted was a subsidy from the rates in aid of wages. (“ No, no !” and a point of order raised.) He would say, then, the Socialist party instead of the Labour party. His point was that the demand for food led to the demand for clothes, and some Socialists frankly accept that demand, which really meant

that the State should give rate aid to wages. There were few Socialists who would deny that many Socialists do take that view. He objected to that, because it was unjust that one man supporting himself should be taxed to increase the wages of another man ; second y, because the inevitable result of a rate aid to wages would be a reduction in wages. Aid could not be given from the rates without a gradual lowering of the whole standard of wages. As Sir Arthur Clay had pointed out, this must lead, in the end, to a breaking up of the home. Dr. Macnamara and his friends were conscious of that, and their answer was "Pursue the parent, flog him at the cart tail." But in practice the parent could not be pursued when the food had been given and eaten. In ninety-nine cases out of one hundred, it was impossible to recover the cost from the parent by civil process. The parent would not pay, and the local authorities would quickly find out that the cost of trying to recover the money was more than it was worth, and therefore, sooner or later, it would be abandoned. Universal free meals would follow, and that was the tendency already in Paris. What should be impressed upon charitable associations was that they should change the whole course of their procedure, and instead of providing meals for children in school take personal service to the homes.

MISS MARSH (Bishops Stortford) said that the experience in a country school of feeding children had shown them that one result was that immediately many more children were sent to school underfed, and the fathers were paying more frequent visits to the public-houses.

REV. A. G. PRICHARD (East Ham) explained that he was present as a member of the West Ham Board of Guardians and chairman of the School Committee of that union. West Ham had a population of 800,000, and presented the problem in its most acute and palpable form. He would like Sir Arthur Clay to visit West Ham and see many of the cases with which they had to deal. He was not a Socialist, but his experiences on the West Ham Board had convinced him of the urgency of the question. He contended that the moment education was made compulsory there was a recognition of State responsibility. It was little short of absurd to say to a parent we insist on your child being educated, and then to refuse the necessary means and methods for making that education effective. Such a committee as Miss Frere proposed was an interference with parental responsibility, and the arrangement that lady favoured was complicated. He suggested that all funds for dealing with the problem should be unified. The municipality accepting the responsibility of education, should also see that the children were physically fit to receive that education. Voluntary agency was all very well, but there was no guarantee of permanence. If they recognised that this was really a public question, it could be dealt with on public lines and a

satisfactory solution possibly arrived at. It was one of those matters in which it was easy to raise difficulties and objections, and to say that we were beginning to go down an inclined plane; but on the other hand those who had to come at close quarters with the problem knew that it was one of urgency. The report of the Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration had taught us much. It was not a question to be settled by mere theory, but to be looked at from the point of view of the welfare of the children. If Mr. Harold Cox had a little more intimate first-hand knowledge of the question, that gentleman might be disposed to considerably modify his views.

THE PRESIDENT read a contribution from the Headmaster of the L.C.C. school at Wood Close, Bethnal Green, which may be found in the Appendix, p. 83.

On the motion of SIR WILLIAM CHANCE, seconded by MR. BARBER, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Sir William Bousfield for presiding at the Conference.

THE PRESIDENT, in acknowledgment, said that it was a great honour to preside over such a Conference as that. They must consider the character of a nation and see that anything which might be done for the purpose of ameliorating temporary distress should not lead to permanent demoralisation.

SIR WILLIAM CHANCE presided at the afternoon session, the discussion being resumed by

MR. T. HOLMES (Secretary of the Howard Association), who drew a vivid picture of the life of a number of poor widows in East London who obtained a livelihood by match-box making, blouse making, cardboard-box making, and similar ill-paid precarious work. It was not the children of the respectable poor and of these poor widows, heroically struggling to preserve their independence, who applied for grants of free food. Free feeding would put up the rents and put down wages. The conditions under which the children lived, the air they breathed, and their environment were more than the question of feeding, and they must bend their energies to attack the cause of the necessity of feeding. No hard and fast line could be drawn; what might be right in one community might be wrong in another, but he was confident that they could not descend to these means without lessening the moral backbone and the grit of the working classes. He would far rather consider at once an absolute state of Socialism than begin by a slow process of experiment which could only end in demoralisation.

MISS KATHARINE BATHURST (late Inspector of Schools) referred to the working of the present Local Government Board Order in Birmingham. Evidence was given to her from a dozen quarters, all bearing in one direction, *i.e.*, that the Local Government Board Order was a farce. There had been good organisation in

Birmingham. The head teachers were asked to let the board of guardians know the names and addresses of any children who in their opinion required food. The guardians then sent their own officer to the homes of the children, and the father was asked to state in writing whether or not in the future he would feed his child. The father promptly promised, and notice was duly sent to the head teacher, who was asked if the promise had been fulfilled. In no single instance had an answer been sent by the head teacher to this second document. Why? Because the father, being frightened, threatened the child, sometimes with most awful threats, if it dared to say it had had no breakfast that morning. Consequently the most starving children of the most neglectful parents no longer apply for food. They had lost the very children whom, under private charity, they used to feed. Two points had been most ably stated by Mr. George Huckhill, who for many years in Birmingham, out of his own pocket, had provided meals for school children up to the time of the issue of the Local Government Board Order, at a cost of £1,800—so she had been told independently—every year. That gentleman did not see why he should help the rates to the tune of £1,800 a year, and so withdrew his voluntary charity. But as the Order did not provide for the fatherless, he had carried on his work for the children who were outside that Order. Two difficulties confronted them in this matter; there was an enormous amount of malnutrition, underfeeding, and physical deterioration, and at the same time there was a great danger of increasing the number of neglected children by not pursuing the parent, and there was the difficulty under present conditions of pursuing parents. By means of medical inspection they might be able to do this.

MR. W. R. SMITH (Norwich Trades Council) said it would have been better if, instead of criticising the Socialists, their arguments had been answered one by one, and not passed by with the suggestion that there was no basis for the statements they make. He quoted Mr. Rowntree and Sir Charles Booth against the view that things are satisfactory, and that the need can be met by voluntary effort. One-third of the population were living on the poverty line; did that suggest that parents could fulfil their responsibilities? His own opinion was that it was impossible for a large section of the working classes to give that food and attention to their children which, living under better conditions, they would be only too glad to give. The evidence collected by a sub-committee of the Norwich Guardians, of which board he was also a member, justified the demand for legislation which would equip local authorities with the necessary means of feeding the children of the nation. The mistake with the Order from the beginning was placing on the relieving officers the duty of making investigations.

Those officers had been trained in a school which completely unfitted them for the task.

ALDERMAN S. COHEN (Hull Board of Guardians) defended relieving officers from the charge brought against them by the last speaker.

MR. SMITH explained that he had preferred no charge; he had simply argued that the training of relieving officers did not fit them for the task of enquiry officer under the Local Government Board Order.

ALDERMAN COHEN said that he believed in the feeding of the children, because they were the future men and women of this country. He hoped that some resolution would be proposed in favour of asking the Local Government Board to take the duty of feeding school children entirely out of the hands of boards of guardians.

MRS. M. M. EVANS (Strand Board of Guardians) repudiated, on behalf of the working men of England, the idea that they were simply on the look-out for their children to be fed, and for other things to be done for them, which it was surely their own duty to perform. They had to look on the question as not only affecting the well-being of England to-day, but in the future. Was it the desire of the Socialists to reduce all the workers to one low level? Were not those who worked with their brains to be considered workers? One result of providing that every child brought into the world should be fed by the State would be to increase the number of youthful and improvident marriages, because the class just above them who paid rates would find the means to do all that was necessary. They had heard that morning from the representative of Paris how there the thing had gone on from little to little, until at last more than a million francs were required from the city of Paris. Was there no analogy between the city of Paris and the city of London? She referred to the growth in the debt of London, and, as to the suggestion that education was free, pointed out that this was a mistaken idea. Education was paid for in some proportion by all classes. She endorsed the experience of Mr. Holmes, that the women were anxious to keep their children properly, although she admitted there was a certain number of women who were lazy and would not take the trouble to cook food properly. With regard to the adequacy of wages earned, she contended that where there was a will there was a way, and that it was fallacious to apply arbitrary standards of living to this or that class. (Hear, hear.)

MISS BAKER (Holborn Board of Guardians) said that twenty-four years ago she was struck with the so-called able-bodied men who came into the workhouse, for it seemed that their poor condition was due largely to lack of proper feeding in their childhood. This had led her to start dinners for the children, so that the next generation in her neighbourhood should not grow up as



the one before it had done. As she had never seen an official list of dinners which had taken hers into account, she thought there must be a great deal of voluntary effort in London which was unaccounted for, and that they had not yet got a proper return of the number of children at present being fed in the metropolis. She was convinced that unhappily there is a need for the dinners, but they could properly be supplied by voluntary service. With an improved system there would not be any danger of pauperising the people or destroying their self-reliance, as might be the case if they were provided by Government. But she was perfectly convinced that a better and more organised system was required, together with the greatest care. Her experience had been that there was an imperceptible growth of the free tickets, and a diminution in the number of tickets that were paid for. The dinners started in 1884, and in some few years as much as £35 or £39 would be paid in the winter; last year they only took £7, a fact which indicated the need for careful administration. She described the method of distributing the tickets at the schools, and urged that much more home visitation was required. The district visitor was often hardly the best person for this work. In concluding, Miss Baker explained that during the whole of the time she had given the dinners there had been no difficulty in raising the necessary money, and testified to the good work of the Penny Dinner Association and the "Referee" Fund, and believed that in this country there need be no fear of a lack of voluntary workers.

MRS. J. KINGSWELL (Portsmouth Board of Guardians) pointed out that in many things to-day all were Socialists, for instance, in the lighting and paving of our streets. In the matter of feeding the children she was also a Socialist, although she did not go so far as many speakers. She did not agree with a feeding of the children which would destroy a sense of parental care, influence and duty, or to destroy the characteristic independence of the English people. They could not forget either that the working men were to-day far and away better off than ever they were perhaps in the life-time of our country. Coming from the Isle of Wight she knew of hundreds of labourers who had brought up their families to be healthy and strong on 11s. or 12s. a week. These children would gradually get into the towns and die out, a fact which made her think that city environment as much as bad feeding had to be considered. Hence she believed that it would be a great thing if more visitation of the homes could be arranged so as gradually to bring about better conditions. If the boards of guardians were given greater powers of detention, as there was an incorrigible lazy class, semi-criminal and drunken, they would have partly solved the problem of dealing with under-fed children.

MR. J. SHANNON (Holborn Board of Guardians, Chairman of the East Finsbury No. 1 Group of Schools), from a practical

point of view, believed it was unnecessary to ask what under-feeding meant. By looking at the children it was easy to pick out those who were well nourished and had good homes. In Finsbury there was a dense population, and in many of the homes it was an utter impossibility that the children could be properly fed. It was said that we could not be fathers and mothers to all those children, but he argued that where parents were unable or from any cause did not fulfil their responsibilities towards their children, the State had a right to step in or voluntary action should be brought into play. He did not mind in the least who did the work as long as the work was properly done and was sufficient. They were all anxious of course to enforce parental responsibility, but how were they to enforce it in, say, cases of desertion, or a husband being sent to prison and where the guardians were giving the wife and children out-relief? Certainly we ought not to punish the children by withholding that which would make them grow up into strong and healthy men and women because of the sins of their parents.

MRS. HERBERT STEAD (Southwark Board of Guardians and Browning Settlement) pointed out that some of the arguments advanced against the feeding of school children were the same arguments that were advanced against free education years ago. Judging from the tone of the Conference, if they had had the voice of the nation behind them there would have been no free education. She was thankful the nation was wiser than the Conference would have been. The natural corollary to free and compulsory education was that the children must be fed by the nation. She argued that because, as they had been told again and again, the children were the nation's best asset; she would go further and say they must be fed because the children were the nation of the future. In education they took one section of a marvellous organism and trained it, and they left the remainder of that organism uncared for, so that a child could not profit by its education through lack of physical power. Education had not demoralised the nation any more than the free feeding of the children would demoralise the people. She trusted the time would come when every child going to school would be fed, whether by the school or some other authority, but she prayed that that authority might never be the board of guardians. A conference of the head teachers in Southwark had been called by her board when the Local Government Board Order was issued, and that representative conference unanimously came to the conclusion that there were children attending the schools for whom meals were required, that the voluntary agencies did not meet the need, and that the work of relieving necessitous cases should be entrusted to some public authority other than the board of guardians. With the weight of sixty-one head teachers behind them, those conclusions were of some value. (Cheers.)

MR. F. H. BENTHAM (Chairman of the Bradford Board of Guardians and member of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws) detailed the experience in Bradford under the Relief (School Children's) Order. Naturally everyone has a large amount of sympathy for children who are short of the necessities of life, and deplore child suffering in any form. In that sense they were all for social advancement and the improvement of the social conditions under which we live. But to discuss Socialism at a Conference such as that was entirely out of place, and that aspect of the question could only be touched upon incidentally. There was a school of thought that was in favour of disintegrating family life: it was advocated openly and avowedly. There was another section which drifted into that view unconsciously, and did not know exactly where it was going. They wanted to ascertain how far they could go to ameliorate the conditions of child life without at the same time increasing the number of parents who would qualify to have their children fed, by sinking to a lower level. The problem was how to improve the condition of the people, either by public or private funds, without increasing the number who would be ready to avail themselves of the assistance, who by a little effort would be able to keep themselves from needing or seeking such aid. If they solved that problem, they would be solving the problem of the Poor Law, and that was the very great difficulty which underlay this question. He looked with great uneasiness to the Bill which was before Parliament. If it passed, and education authorities were given power to feed school children, they entered on a path which they did not know whither it would lead, and once entered, would be very difficult to retrace their steps. He had, however, confidence in the House of Commons that it would not pass such a measure. But if an Act did pass he hoped it would be in such a modified form as to obviate all danger of demoralising the people. In Bradford they put the Order into operation, and tried at the same time to improve the social condition of the people who came under the Order. They met with great difficulties. In the previous winter a Mayor's Fund had been started, and £3,300 were raised for feeding the children, and that money was placed in the hands of a voluntary organisation. By the end of August, 1905, £2,600 had been spent, part of which was in clothing. In the first three months the number of recipients gradually increased; there was a total absence of investigation in the sense that the work was done by trained persons. Then the Order came into operation, but the Education Committee were running in the old groove, and found it difficult to get out of it. An agitation arose for the charge to be placed on the rates, and it was proposed to vote the mayor a salary to devote to the purpose. The guardians were anxious to save the situation and put the Order in force. The children were divided into three classes: (1) the permanently

impoverished, (2) the temporarily in want, and (3) the neglected class. The following winter sufficient private funds could not be raised, and the Education Authority found itself unable to feed the children, and was induced consequently to put the whole thing into the hands of the guardians forthwith. Four lady investigators were appointed, and the necessary investigations were made during the month of August. All the three classes were fed together by caterers in the vicinity of the schools, and at present 700 children (500 belonging to class 2) were fed. The parents of the children in the third class were told they would be proceeded against if the meals were not paid for. The result had been these children were better fed and fresh applications were not coming in. The guardians had done more, for they were trying to get at the children living in vicious surroundings, and 88 had been permanently adopted by the guardians. The only satisfactory way of dealing effectively with the whole question was to improve the conditions of the home.

MRS. PROCTOR (Portsmouth Board of Guardians) said that the great thing was to make parents feel their responsibility for their children. The children who were in want should be fed, but great care and discrimination were necessary. She agreed with Miss Frere as to the private sources from which the work should spring, and as to the wisdom of having lady visitors. Many things in a home would escape a male visitor. Much good would be done by taking crippled children and the feeble-minded out of overcrowded rooms and conditions tainted with immorality, and greater help might advantageously be given to widows. (Hear, hear.)

MR. LLOYD-BAKER said it had been urged that free education had not demoralised the people, but in his opinion experience pointed to a different conclusion. Ever since free education had been given there had been a continual demand for more things to be given, and every fresh demand paved the way for another one. In Paris and Vienna the provision of free meals led in one year to double the number of children asking for and getting them. This was a natural result, and it meant that a large number of self-respecting parents who maintained their own children without applying for help, seeing how easy it was to get the meals, relinquished their independence and self-respect and also applied for the meals, so that the class just above those in want were sooner or later demoralised. Having quoted testimony from New York as to the injurious effect of giving free dinners indiscriminately, he pointed out that similar results must occur in this country from the adoption of a wrong policy. Not only so, but rate-aid in one direction would mean that rents would tend to rise in the opposite direction and wages would be depressed, leading to increased competition among the workers. What they gained in one way they would lose in

another, so that he thought that the supposed benefits the Bill would confer on the working classes had been enormously exaggerated. (Hear, hear.)

MRS. EDWARDS (Brentford Board of Guardians) said that the English people had a fatal want of logic. The French taught us to be truly logical; they placed the individual first, fed the children regardless of consequences, and, from their point of view, they did it thoroughly. The results in Paris were patent to all. We refused to learn from experience, the experience of Mansion House funds, and the like. Did they think that if they fed the children as proposed that day that they would advance at all on the moral and social plane? She was afraid it was a retrograde movement, and she hoped the country would rise superior to any considerations of momentary benefits.

MR. APPLETON (South Shields Board of Guardians), as a working man, claimed that it was impossible for the working classes to feed their children properly on the wages which many of them earned. Large numbers were living a hand-to-mouth existence on the Tyneside. He urged that they should try to devise some means for dealing with the families of honest, hard-working men at times when they could not get employment. He was not in favour of giving meals to all children, but believed there should be a discrimination as to the necessities of each case.

MR. E. H. HARVEY (Swindon and Highworth Board of Guardians) contended that the wages question was directly involved in the problem. The backbone was largely taken out of the working classes now, and the inability to feed their children often induced men to work for low wages rather than see their children starve. If they knew their children were fed, they would be more independent. It had been urged that the expense of the free feeding would fall on the middle-classes, but he advocated the adoption of a system of taxation which would place the burden on the shoulders of those best able to bear it.

MRS. BRIDGES ADAMS (late member of the London School Board) referring to the contention that the free feeding of school children would bring down wages, said that the workers had declared in favour of a principle which went much further than the Bill under discussion. The organised workers realised that capital held the whip-hand of labour when the children were starving at home, so they had definitely formulated their policy, and the Bill represented a small fraction of their demands. As to Miss Bathurst's sensible suggestion that there should be medical inspection in schools, she reminded the Conference that the Trade Union Congress had again and again declared in favour of scientific physical training and medical inspection. But the capitalist Press took no notice of such congresses as theirs, and kept their supporters in a fools' paradise. There was a Trade Union Education Bill which claimed that not only should the

children have intellectual development, but also physical development in State-supported schools, together with height, weight and chest measurements, and this would give them some data to go upon as to whether children were underfed or not. Mention had been made of the deplorable effects supposed to have followed free meals in America, but she did not notice that the upper classes, whose children were educated in foundations stolen from the poor, were demoralised by the privileges they had obtained and by being maintained from endowments. How dare they say that the poor would be demoralised, or the workers pauperised, by using the wealth which they produced? Did the public parks demoralise the people? They might with equal force refuse to have State-lighted streets. Fears had been expressed that any such measure as that contemplated would lead to an increase in the population, but she reminded the Conference of the movement which had taken hold in this country for the full State maintenance of children. She advised some of the members of the conference to attend the next Trade Union Congress, and judge if the representatives there of the skilled artisans of this country represented the thriftless, selfish and idle section of the community, and whether or not their views were entitled to consideration. (Cheers.)

DR. PIERCE (Chairman of the Birkenhead Board of Guardians) said that while all recognised that the children must be fed, he thought that it would be a step in the wrong direction to take help from the State and remove the responsibility from the parents. He would be sorry to think that the charitably disposed people of this country would not rise to the position. Even if the children were fed in the schools, they would have to return in the evening to the bad surroundings. What benefit would they then derive from the school meals? The benefit would be balanced by the home conditions. He agreed with Miss Frere that it would be better to keep to voluntary workers, but thought that valuable aid could be obtained from the relieving officers behind the scenes. Certainly the Poor-law guardians ought not to have the duty of feeding the children cast upon them.

MISS WARD (Manager of the Tavistock Place Crippled Children's School, L.C.C.), pointing out that the institution she represented was a pioneer institution, explained the system of dinners in vogue there, and said there was a charge of 2d. for the dinners, and the parents simply paid it. In 1902, 19,883 dinners were provided, and £174 8s. 11d. was received; in 1905, in nineteen schools, 167,643 meals were furnished, and the parents paid £1,389 2s. 8d. There was a small deficit on the cost of the food, which was made up by private subscriptions. There was amazingly little difficulty in getting the money from the parents, who valued the meal given to the children. On four days there was a hot joint, and a cold joint on the fifth day, two vegetables and a pudding. When a child did not pay because the mother

could not give the money, the home was at once visited, but the dinners were granted without the other children knowing anything about the visit.

SIR WILLIAM CHANCE expressed the general satisfaction at the success and usefulness of the Conference, and proposed a vote of thanks to the authors of the papers and those who had taken part in the discussion, especially to M. Marcel Kleine. There had been some difference of opinion among the speakers, but all would recognise the value of the information which had been forthcoming.

MR. W. GREEN (Hunslet) seconded the motion, which was carried with acclamation.

M. KLEINE acknowledged the compliment.

A vote of thanks was accorded to Sir William Chance for presiding, and in reply,

SIR WILLIAM CHANCE, who was enthusiastically cheered, said that it was a pleasure to preside over the Conference, but he desired to repeat publicly what had been said more than once at important gatherings in that Guildhall, that their deep and sincere acknowledgments were due to Mr. W. G. Lewis, the secretary of the Conference, for the great trouble and pains he had taken to organise the proceedings. Mr. Lewis (whose work had been purely in an honorary capacity) initiated the movement for the present Conference, and it was due to his disinterested enthusiasm in the cause of the young that that eminently successful Conference had been rendered possible. (Cheers.) He was sure he would be but voicing the opinion of the whole Conference when he said that they heartily thanked Mr. Lewis for his well-directed efforts in the promotion of the Conference. (Cheers.)

The proceedings then terminated.

APPENDIX.

STATEMENT ON "UNDER-FEEDING," BY MR. JOHN SCOTT, B.A. (LOND.), HEADMASTER, L.C.C. SCHOOL, WOOD CLOSE, BETHNAL GREEN, E.

My statement is based on an experience of twenty-five years as adult teacher, twenty-three of them in various parts of London, nearly five at Wood Close, Bethnal Green, on the borders of Whitechapel, classed by the Council as a school of special service because of great poverty and other difficulties. I have devoted much time and study to the question of distress of school children, and have had exceptional opportunity in forming an opinion. Special, careful and extensive investigations were made in 1903 and 1905 into causes of distress by members of Wood Close Relief Committee in connection with the Joint Committee, L.C.C., on under-fed children, in which twenty-six and forty-two selected cases of children, presumably under-fed or in distress, were investigated by personal visits to the homes to ascertain the causes, difficulties, resources. In this we had the special assistance of the Lady Warden, St. Hilda's Settlement, Bethnal Green, E. Replies or reports were also obtained from the rector and other clergy of Bethnal Green, from the Charity Organisation Society, the guardians' officers, district visitors, Invalid Children's Aid Association, Jewish Board of Guardians, and others.

It was the opinion of both the committees, especially confirmed by the Lady Warden of St. Hilda's, and the rector of Bethnal Green, both members—

I. That under-feeding or insufficiency of food was only one and by no means a very serious, probably on the whole a trivial, cause of the poor physique, low vitality, and inability to profit fully by the instruction given.

The anæmic, unhealthy and dull appearance of our school children attributed to under-feeding is the result of many and complex causes, of which under-feeding is only one. We found others to be insanitation, overcrowding, absence of ventilation by night, late hours, ill-prepared or ill-chosen food, clothing insufficient to retain heat, bad footwear, negligence and other personal defects of parents, and employment out of school.

II. That under-feeding is much less than is assumed ; there are few cases in which it extends over any considerable period.

III. That both permanent and temporary cases can easily be dealt with by existing agencies, the more so if these voluntary associations were organised for co-operation.

IV. That careful enquiry by skilled investigators checked in committee is absolutely essential before feeding is undertaken.

V. That teachers are not trained or fitted as investigators, that it is not desirable, that they are better employed as factors in social amelioration in their legitimate work.

VI. That schools ought not to be feeding places, nor relief centres, nor teachers relieving officers.

VII. That reformation of the home is the remedy for the removal of school "difficulties."

VIII. That recovery of cost from parents bristles with difficulties.

Recommendations.

That existing relief committees in poor districts be enlarged, made more effective, to co-operate with other bodies, and to deal with other matters tending to the reformation of the home.

Our experience of the evils or dangers of school feeding points to encouragement of thriftlessness, shiftlessness, indifference, drunkenness, to lessening of parental responsibility, and to mere tinkering with the real evil, to be attacked only in and through the home.

THE CHILD AT SCHOOL.

(From a leading article in the *Evening Standard and St. James's Gazette*, May 23rd, 1906.)

THE day will come when the term "child criminal," which we use so glibly, will be looked upon as a verbal absurdity. In that day civilised peoples will have learnt the futility of sending naughty boys and girls to prison to learn to be good. Already they are beginning to realise that reformation is not brought about in that way. The gaol does not educate. It merely punishes.

The progress of wisdom in its application to juvenile misdeeds is proved by the conference sitting at the Guildhall. A large, fairly representative, and enlightened gathering has assembled, on the invitation of the British section of the International Congress for the Welfare and Protection of Children. It listens to the experience of reformers from various parts of England and the world, and discusses the best means of dealing with naughty children. The speakers, by their words, show that they have emancipated themselves from the view of the wrongdoer which finds expression

in the term "child criminal," and that they do not labour under any oppressive notion of the reformatory and educative effect of a prison life.

The most practical signs of this emancipation—signs more welcome than a torrent of theorising—are, first, the establishment of special courts for the hearing of charges against juvenile offenders; secondly, the tentative adoption in Glasgow of the plan, tried and not found wanting in America, of employing probation officers to keep an eye on children who have been put by the magistrate on their good behaviour. We take it that by this time the principle of children's courts, though not generally practised, has been sanctioned in principle. One or two cities having led the way, we may expect that others will follow in it. The probation system, however, will not be so readily accepted. Though not really difficult, it is certainly harder to set and keep going. Its benefits must be brought home to that leavening portion of society which does not rest content with punishing a child and thereafter leaving him to his own devices till he comes up again for punishment.

Glasgow is bringing the probation system pretty closely home. Mr. Bruce Murray, the pioneer of this improved method in Scotland, was able to tell the Conference that Glasgow's experience of the probation system, so far as it had gone, was very satisfactory, a much larger percentage of cases than had been expected having turned out successfully.

America is entitled to the credit of having shown the way to judicious rather than judicial treatment of the child offender. In the American cities the probation system is more completely organised than even in Glasgow. For the present it is handicapped in this country by the necessities of laws passed for the adult criminal, not the child.

The work offers a fine field for the philanthropist in search of an object. The difference between the model and the copy, generally speaking, is that in America the reformatory department is kept distinct from the police, whereas in Glasgow the two are necessarily intermingled. They will and must be till we have got rid of that pestilential notion that the naughty child is a criminal and that prison will educate him.

The great triumph is that we have made a start, and that, as may be gathered from this Conference, it is a real, not a false, start. The foundations have been laid for a new and saner policy of reformation. On them the social thinker, the social worker, have to build. They are called on to combat prejudice, to convince the people around them that we have not reached the ideal of reformation. They have to show that as long as we continue to send children to prison on small pretexts we shall manufacture criminals, and that by more sensible means we may not only rescue them from evil but instruct them in good.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHRONICLE, MAY 26, 1906.

Legislation Concerning Children.—It will be remembered that a few years ago an International Congress for the welfare and protection of children was organised, and the British section of the Congress has since done excellent work in promoting a healthy public opinion on the question of legislation concerning children. During the past week a Conference convened by the Committee of the British section of the Congress met at the Guildhall, in the City of London, to consider certain changes in the law which are advocated by some of the persons who have been the most active spirits in the movement. Sir William Bousfield, in his presidential address, grappled with some of the difficulties that have to be faced. . . . The principal subject that the Conference discussed—which, indeed, it was mainly convened to consider—was the amendment of the law in the direction of treating the children who have committed some petty offences as something different from ordinary criminals. One speaker described the successful working of a scheme at Birmingham, where all children's cases were dealt with in a special court, far removed from the police court, and wholly unconnected with the associations of the criminal law as it is generally seen there. It seems that the magistrate in this court sits more in the capacity of a father dealing with an erring child than in that of the austere judge, whose function is to administer the penalties and enforce the terrors of the law against evil doers. Instead of having the small culprit who has committed some petty offence which boys are only too prone to indulge in brought into the dock, over the walls of which he is not tall enough to see, and in which he stands guarded by one or two stalwart constables, apparently to prevent that escape which is impossible or that violence of which he is wholly incapable, he comes before the magistrate in an ordinary room to answer the complaint that is made against him, and to receive some severe admonition or perhaps some mild punishment to which he submits without degradation or anything more than a feeling of intense humiliation. The work of this court in Birmingham and of a similar court in Manchester was described to the Conference, and a case was fully made out for extending the system to other places. . . . From beginning to end the Conference was unanimous as to the extreme importance of keeping youthful offenders away from the contaminating influences of contact with adult criminals; and great stress was put on the advisability of remanding children to special homes or institutions rather than keeping them in police-stations or prisons. . . . To find suitable remand homes in all cases is by no means easy, and nothing but the co-operation of all public bodies, so that each may offer the accommodation that is most suitable in any particular locality,

will effect a satisfactory settlement. Such Conferences as these help very materially in the framing of laws and in the formation of public opinion that shall secure the passage of those laws through Parliament. The Conference has in the past exercised a notable influence on legislation, and it hopes to secure such a strengthening of the law as shall remove the present drawbacks to a more far-seeing policy in regard to the treatment of children than has hitherto been adopted. If a child does wrong, he must be punished so as to discourage him from repeating his misdeed ; but it is undesirable that he should be so degraded in his punishment that at the outset of his life he should be compelled to feel that he is becoming one of the criminal classes. The aim of the Congress—and as to this there could be no mistake, judging from the attitude of the speakers—was to secure that the law gives a fair chance to every erring child to reform and become a useful citizen when he grows up.

THE PROBATION SYSTEM IN NEW YORK.

Official Report of the Working.

Mr. E. Fellows Jenkins (Secretary of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children¹), who has throughout taken a deep and practical interest in all matters appertaining to the International Congress, sends the official Report, just issued, on the operations of the Children's Courts of New York for the past year. It may be summarised as follows :—

“ The jurisdiction of the Children's Court of the First Division of the City of New York extends, except in homicide actions, to the cases of all children under the age of sixteen taken into custody for violations of law in the Boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx, the old City of New York. This court deals with the largest number of children's cases of any similar court in the world. The number of arraignments for the year ending December 31, 1905, was 9,418. The annual report for 1904 showed that the total arraignments were 7,631, a slight decrease from the number for 1903, which was 7,647. The population of Manhattan and the Bronx in 1905 had reached 2,390,382, while in 1904 the population was 2,235,060.

“ The law establishing in New York City the first separate court for children, with full and complete jurisdiction, was passed in 1902. An important feature of the law creating the children's court was the requirement that it be held in a building entirely separate and apart from any other court. By the system which the establishment of the children's court has made possible, the child is, in the vast majority of cases, led into proper paths after

¹ 297 Fourth Avenue (Corner East 23rd Street), New York.

the first step towards criminality and saved to a life of future usefulness. The justice sitting in the children's court, besides being judge and jury, is vested with quasi-parental powers. His work is largely preventative rather than punitive.

"The court deals not only with the cases of children taken into custody charged with offences, but with those found exposed, neglected and without proper guardianship. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is the custodian of every child taken into custody, pending its arraignment and the final disposition of its case in this court. The parole system has been of inestimable value in the plan of the court to assist convicted or wayward children to work out their own reformation without commitment to an institution. Of the 6,502 children convicted or found to be disorderly, ungovernable, or without proper guardianship, 1,188 were released on parole. More than 82 per cent. of these children have profited and made such improvement while on parole that they were finally discharged or released under suspended sentence. Mr. E. Fellows Jenkins is in charge of the parole work. For more than thirty years Mr. Jenkins has been identified with the work of bettering the condition of children in New York. Agents of the society visit the home and school of the child who is on parole, and keep careful record of his conduct and the home conditions. On the day when the case is again called in court, a report in writing is submitted, and, assisted by this, the court determines whether to continue the parole, release under suspension of sentence, finally discharge, or commit to an institution. Of the 1,188 children released on parole last year it was necessary to commit only 207 for violation of parole. The court can at its discretion place the father of any child who has been committed under an order to pay wholly or in part for the child's maintenance while in an institution. The cost to the city is two dollars a week for the maintenance of each child in an institution because of improper guardianship, and 110 dollars a year for each child committed for reformation. The enforcement of orders on fathers to pay has a wholesome effect. This money is collected for the city through the agency of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The amount collected last year, as a result of court orders, was 27,854 dollars.

"Assistance of the most practical value is rendered by the charitable workers, Catholic, Hebrew and Protestant, who are daily in court and give moral and material aid to children after final disposition of cases by the court."



THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
FOR THE
WELFARE AND PROTECTION
OF
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The Next Congress ^{will be held at} **BERLIN,**
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Copies of the Report of the previous Congress, which was held in London—a valuable compendium (of about 400 pages) on the physical and moral care of children—may be obtained at half-price (1s. 3d.) by subscribers to this Report.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

WELFARE AND PROTECTION

OF CHILDREN

THE NEW YORK COMMISSION

ON MAY 22, 1907.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AND IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT

AND IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT

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TO BERLIN

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